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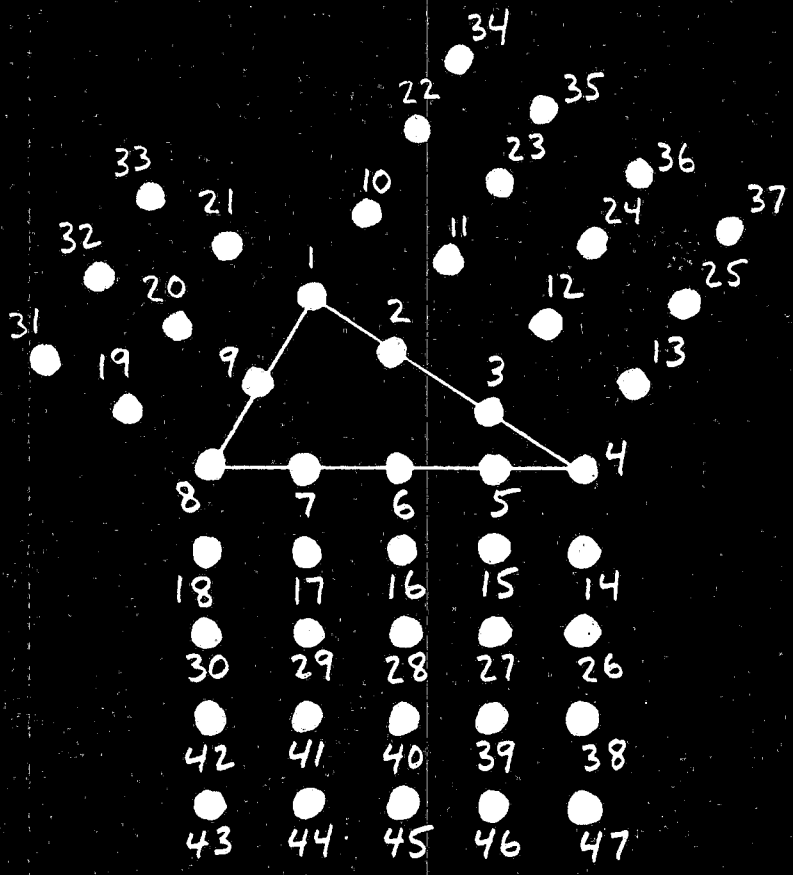

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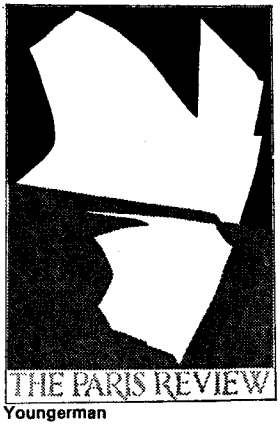

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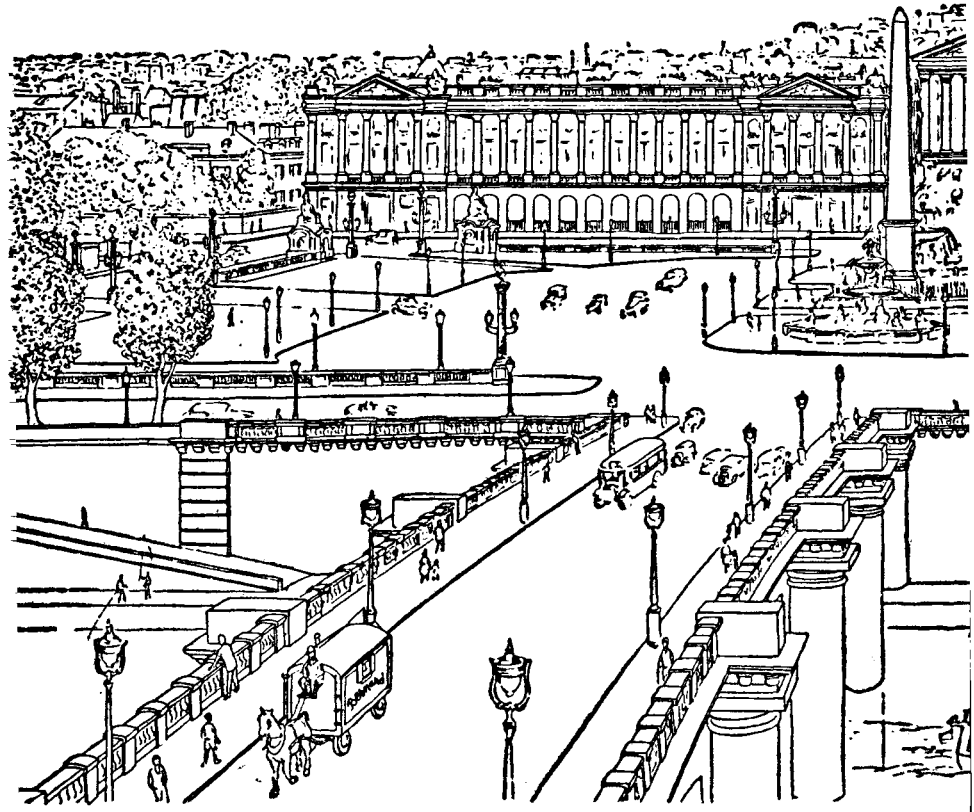

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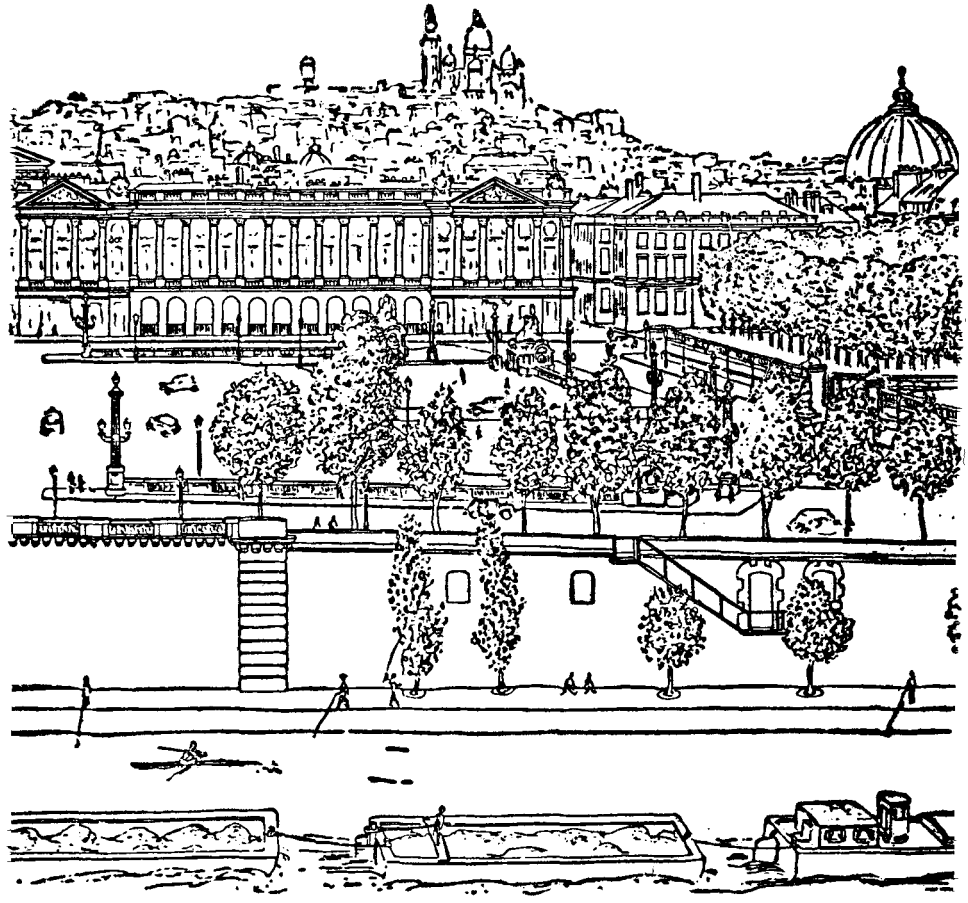

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Interview

Anthony Burgess	The Art of Fiction XLVIII	119

Art

George Schneeman	*Book Covers*	111

Prose

Jane Bowles	*Emmy Moore's Journal*	12
Keith Cohen	*Natural Settings*	25
Erica Jong	*From the Country of Regrets*	98
Phillip Lopate	*The Chamber Music Evening*	63
Georges Perec	*Between Sleep and Waking*	49
Maurice Roche	*Skol Nidre*	90

Poetry

Edwin Brock	*Prototypes*	60
Tom Clark	*At Malibu*	41
Jack Collom	*11–23–69*	116
Robert Creeley	*Days and Days*	109
Curtis Faville	*Poem*	117
Joanne Kyger	*Five Poems*	44
Lewis MacAdams	*Two Poems*	108
Dave Mokshi	*Death Soup*	19
Alice Notley	*Poem*	57
Anne Waldman	*Lines*	40

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Emmy Moore's Journal

Jane Bowles

May

On certain days I forget why I'm here. Today once again I wrote my husband all my reasons for coming. He encouraged me to come each time I was in doubt. He said that the worst danger for me was a state of vagueness, so I wrote telling him why I had come to the Hotel Henry—my eighth letter on this subject—but with each new letter I strengthen my position. I am reproducing the letter here. Let there be no mistake. My journal is intended for publication. I want to publish for glory, but also in order to aid other women. This is the letter to my husband, Paul Moore, to whom I have been married sixteen years. (I am childless.) He is of North Irish descent, and a very serious lawyer. Also a solitary and lover of the country. He knows all mushrooms, bushes and trees, and he is interested in geology. But these interests do not exclude me. He is sympathetic towards me, and kindly. He wants very much for me to be happy, and worries because I am not. He knows everything about me, including how much I deplore being the feminine kind of woman that I am. In fact,

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I am unusually feminine for an American of Anglo stock. (Born in Boston.) I am almost a "Turkish" type. Not physically, at least not entirely, because though fat I have ruddy Scotch cheeks and my eyes are round and not slanted or almond-shaped. But sometimes I feel certain that I exude an atmosphere very similar to theirs (the Turkish women's) and then I despise myself. I find the women in my country so extraordinarily manly and independent, capable of leading regiments, or of fending for themselves on desert islands if necessary. (These are poor examples, but I am getting my point across.) For me it is an experience simply to have come here alone to the Hotel Henry and to eat my dinner and lunch by myself. If possible before I die, I should like to become a little more independent, and a little less Turkish than I am now. Before I go any further, I had better say immediately that I mean no offense to Turkish women. They are probably busy combating the very same Turkish quality in themselves that I am controlling in me. I understand, too (though this is irrelevant) that many Turkish women are beautiful, and I think that they have discarded their veils. Any other American woman would be sure of this. She would know one way or the other whether the veils had been discarded, whereas I am afraid to come out with a definite statement. I have a feeling that they really have got rid of their veils, but I won't swear to it. Also, if they have done so, I have no idea when they did. Was it many years ago or recently?

Here is my letter to Paul Moore, my husband, in which there is more about Turkish women. Since I am writing this journal with a view to publication, I do not want to ramble on as though I had all the space in the world. No publisher will attempt printing an *enormous* journal written by an unknown woman. It would be too much of a financial risk. Even I, with my ignorance of all matters pertaining to business, know this much. But they may print a small one.

My letter: (written yesterday, the morrow of my drunken evening in the Blue Bonnet Room when I accosted the society salesman.)

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Dearest Paul:

I cannot simply live out my experiment here at the Hotel Henry without trying to justify or at least explain in letters my reasons for being here, and with fair regularity. You encouraged me to write whenever I felt I needed to clarify my thoughts. But you did tell me that I must not feel the need to *justify* my actions. However, I *do* feel the need to justify my actions, and I am certain that until the prayed-for metamorphosis has occurred I shall go on feeling just this need. Oh, how well I know that you would interrupt me at this point and warn me against expecting too much. So I shall say in lieu of metamorphosis, the prayed-for *improvement*. But until then I must justify myself every day. Perhaps you will get a letter every day. On some days the need to write lodges itself in my throat like a cry that must be uttered.

As for the Turkish problem, I am coming to it. You must understand that I am an admirer of Western civilization; that is, of the women who are members of this group. I feel myself that I fall short of being a member, that by some curious accident I was not born in Turkey but should have been. Because of my usual imprecision I cannot even tell how many countries belong to what we call Western Civilization, but I believe Turkey is the place where East meets West, isn't it? I can just about imagine the women there, from what I have heard about the country and the pictures I have seen of it. As for being troubled or obsessed by real Oriental women, I am not. (I refer to the Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, and so on.) Naturally I am less concerned with the Far Eastern women because there is no danger of my being like them. (The Turkish women are just near enough.) The Far Eastern ones are so very far away, at the opposite end of the earth, that they could easily be just as independent and masculine as the women of the Western world. The ones living in-between the two masculine areas would be soft and feminine. Naturally I don't believe this for a minute, but still, the real Orientals are so far away and such a mystery to me that it might as well be true. Whatever they were, it couldn't effect me. They look too

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different from the way I look. Whereas Turkish women don't. (Their figures are exactly like mine, alas!)

Now I shall come to the point. I know full well that you will consider the above discourse a kind of joke. Or if you don't, you will be irritated with me for making statements of such a sweeping and inaccurate nature. For surely you will consider the picture of the world that I present as inaccurate. I myself know that this concept of the women (all three sets—Western, Middle and Eastern) is a puerile one. It could even be called downright idiotic. Yet I assure you that I see things this way, if I relax even a little and look through my own eyes into what is really inside my head. (Though because of my talent for mimicry I am able to simulate looking through the eyes of an educated person when I wish to.) Since I am giving you such a frank picture of myself, I may as well go the whole hog and admit to you that my secret picture of the world is grossly inaccurate. I have completely forgotten to include in it any of the Latin countries. (France, Italy, Spain.) For instance, I have jumped from the Anglo world to the semi-Oriental as if there were no countries in between at all. I know that these exist. (I have even lived in two of them.) But they do not fit into my scheme. I just don't think about the Latins very much, and this is less understandable than my not thinking about the Chinese or Javanese or Japanese women. You can see why without my having to explain it to you. I do know that the French women are more interested in sports than they used to be, and for all I know they may be indistinguishable from Anglo women by now. I haven't been to France recently so I can't be sure. But in any case the women of those countries don't enter into my picture of the world. Or shall I say that the fact of having forgotten utterly to consider them has not altered the way I visualize the division of the world's women? Incredible though it may seem to you, it hasn't altered anything. (My having forgotten all Latin countries, South America included.) I want you to know the whole truth about me. But don't imagine that I wouldn't be capable of concealing my ignorance from you if I wanted to. I am so wily and feminine that I could live by your side for a lifetime

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and deceive you afresh each day. But I will have no truck with feminine wiles. I know how they can absorb the hours of the day. Many women are delighted to sit around spinning their webs. It is an absorbing occupation, and the women feel they are getting somewhere. And so they are, but only for as long as the man is there to be deceived. And a wily woman alone is a pitiful sight to behold. Naturally.

I shall try to be honest with you so that I can live with you and yet won't be pitiful. Even if tossing my feminine tricks out the window means being left no better than an illiterate backwoodsman, or the bottom fish scraping along the ocean bed, I prefer to have it this way. Now I am too tired to write more. Though I don't feel that I have clarified enough or justified enough

I shall write you soon about the effect the war has had upon me. I have spoken to you about it, but you have never seemed to take it very seriously. Perhaps seeing in black and white what I feel will affect your opinion of me. Perhaps you will leave me. I accept the challenge. My Hotel Henry experience includes this risk. I got drunk two nights ago. It's hard to believe that I am forty-seven, isn't it?

My love,
Emmy

Now that I have copied this letter into my journal (I had forgotten to make a carbon), I shall take my walk. My scheme included a few weeks of solitude at the Hotel Henry before attempting anything. I did not even intend to write in my journal as soon as I started to, but simply to sit about collecting my thoughts, waiting for the knots of habit to undo themselves. But after only a week here—two nights ago—I felt amazingly alone and disconnected from my past life, so I began my journal.

My first interesting contact was the salesman in the Blue Bonnet Room. I had heard about this eccentric through my in-laws, the Moores, before I ever came up here. My husband's cousin Laurence Moore told me about him when he heard I

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was coming. He said: "Take a walk through Grey and Bottle's Department Store, and you'll see a man with a lean red face and reddish hair selling materials by the bolt. That man has an income and is related to Hewitt Molain. He doesn't need to work. He was in my fraternity. Then he disappeared. The next I heard of him he was working there at Grey and Bottle's. I stopped by and said hello to him. For a nut he seemed like a very decent chap. You might even have a drink with him. I think he's quite up to general conversation."

I did not mention Laurence Moore to the society salesman because I thought it might irritate him. I lied and pretended to have been here for months, when actually this is still only my second week at the Hotel Henry. I want everyone to think I have been here a long time. Surely it is not to impress them. Is there anything impressive about a lengthy stay at the Hotel Henry? Any sane person would be alarmed that I should even ask such a question. I ask it because deep in my heart I *do* think a lengthy stay at the Hotel Henry is impressive. Very easy to see that I would, and even sane of me to think it impressive, but not sane of me to expect anyone else to think so, particularly a stranger. Perhaps I simply like to hear myself telling it. I hope so. I shall write some more tomorrow, but now I must go out. I am going to buy a supply of cocoa. When I'm not drunk I like to have a cup of cocoa before going to sleep. My husband likes it too.

* * *

She could not stand the overheated room a second longer. With some difficulty she raised the window, and the cold wind blew in. Some loose sheets of paper went skimming off the top of the desk and flattened themselves against the bookcase. She shut the window and they fell to the floor. The cold air had changed her mood. She looked down at the sheets of paper. They were part of the letter she had just copied. She picked them up: "*I don't feel that I have clarified enough or justified enough,*" she read. She closed her eyes and shook her head. She had been so happy copying this letter into her

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journal, but now her heart was faint as she scanned its scattered pages. "I have said nothing," she muttered to herself in alarm. "I have said nothing at all. I have not clarified my reasons for being at the Hotel Henry. I have not justified myself."

Automatically she looked around the room. A bottle of whiskey stood on the floor beside one of the legs of the bureau. She stepped forward, picked it up by the neck, and settled with it into her favorite wicker chair.

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In Gloom

Eleanor
Skips
TV

$670 Stolen
From Bra

The Orphan
Pygmy Whale
Is Surviving

Paiutes Still
Wary On
Land Bill

Thief Picks
"Love Flower"

New Words
Spoken At
Dartmouth

Kissinger To
Keep Talking

Trudeau Is
More Afraid Of
Alcohol Than Pot

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Le Drugstore
Burns In Paris

Teachers
Meet In
Wonderland

Guillotine
Builder
Uses It

Bobby Seale
Lectures
Accountants

Beef
Prices
Dip

School Drug
Abuse Link
To Boredom

Another
Chance For
Bella Abzug

Hoffa Tells
Of Prison's
Gay Problem

Nixon Signs
Communicable
Disease Bill

Swiss Cavalry
Holds Its Horses

Admiral
Denies Illegal
Navy Raids

Con Ed Can't
Take Water
From River

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Gun Ban
Death Order
By Marcos

Jet's Collapsed
Gear Key
In Probe

House Probe
Of Watergate
Bugging Blocked

Escaped
Con Seized
On TV

Rail Crash
—Hogs
Everywhere

Switched-On
Women Help

Gemini Took
Penny Up—To
$100,000

Agnew Rips
McGovern In
Home State

Mass Poisoning
On Sugar Buns

Cleaning Up
The Tourists'
Environment

4 Topless
Bar Hustlers
Found Guilty

Acupuncture
Works
On Rabbits

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He Wed
His Favorite
Football Player

Dogs Kill
Sheep
In Utah

"Godspell"
Blows Fuse

Pumpkin
Mashers
Strike

Sea Lions
Will Learn To
Clear Mines

Manson
Transferred
To Folsom

Mother's
Headstones
Get The OK

Bremer Says
A Pass Was
Made At Him

Prop Chews
Fuselage

Groom Put In
Chastity Belt

Nixon Heading
For Landslide
Gallup Says

Death Soup
Firm Reopens

9–11/72

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Natural Settings

Keith Cohen

Part One

1

The snow stood up in drifts around the edges of the frozen pond. Gusts of wind cleaned away huge irregular circles on the surface of the pond, so that, as the sun set behind the scattered hills near the bay, dull red reflections slid momentarily across the constantly shifting patches of bare ice. The swirling configurations of slightly banked snow changed once again. But now the entire pond gave off a kind of phosphorescence, the iced surfaces blending into the gathered snow. It seemed at one moment to be the glow of the snow itself, at another moment to be the mirror-image of the still bright sky.

The snow begins to fall again, and the pond is slowly covered with a uniform blueness. The wind has died down. The peaks it formed are gradually leveled. And now a red stream runs briefly along the snow, tracing a path of narrow, steaming trenches. Snow flies. The blood starts new paths in numerous directions, until it is finally frozen and encased by the faster and faster falling snow. The flying snow, yielding to gravity, falls to the ground.

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2

The shiny lumps of coal sat motionless. A flash of fire sprang across their surface and disappeared. A second and third flash sprang across the surface at nearly the same instant. Then gradually the intermittent flashes became flames that shot up, still irregularly, from one side of the coal heap to the other. As the flames twisted themselves through the cracks between the coal, each small chunk turned a deeper shade of red. The whole surface of the heap was now covered with thick flames, which beat at one another as they vanished high above the coals.

The flames have used themselves up now, and the coals are covered with a uniform blueness. The heap has fallen into a glowing, undifferentiated mass. A faint whistle rises up the chimney continuously. It is at this moment that Tom empties a pale liquid from his clinking glass and gets up from a deep armchair to go out.

As he puts on his thick red and black plaid hunting jacket, he looks out toward the pond through the picture window that dominates the front side of the house. The snow, however, has covered nearly every surface outside, so that all he can see at first is his own glowing fireplace reflected in the glass. He cannot get his eyes to refocus; they wander across the glass but see only images of the living room (the fat cushions arranged neatly around the fireplace, the two silhouetted armchairs facing each other and the fire, the dim paintings hung on the far wall) and others, more faintly, of the passageway leading into the study, where a small light illuminates one corner of a leather-covered couch. Tom scans these reflections of the house interior, unable for a moment to redirect his gaze because the images have all an equivalent absence of depth and seem actually to be painted on the window. His own action of buttoning his coat, the flashing reflection of his elbow lit by the fire, causes the window to reassume an apparent perspective. This is all he can see of himself, however—the vague outline of his left arm and the bright elbow as it moves down from one buttonhole to the

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next—since the cornice above the window juts out several feet into the room and thus throws anything underneath it into shadow. As his eyes focus beyond the window itself, he can begin to make out the few trees customarily visible to the east of the tall gabled house, the tiny black metal flag sticking up from the rounded top of the mailbox, and at last the surface of the frozen pond where the shifting snow reflects the last light of the setting sun.

3

The white sheets and the bright red blanket came together into a twisted heap in the middle of the bed. Although the over-sheet was tucked in between the mattress and the box-springs, the ends of the blanket lay haphazardly over the edges of the bed and onto the floor. The two pillows were each bashed in at several places; one was jammed up against the wall from which the bed extended, the other lay near the middle of the bed and slightly to one side.

Now the dark green woolen spread lies creaseless across the bed. The pillows are carefully tucked into the uppermost folds of the spread, and at the corners of the bed the material is slightly gathered into thick pleats. Yona comes out of the bathroom that adjoins the bedroom, naked, rubbing the back of her head with a white towel. A drop of water runs down the side of her neck, then across the chest and between her breasts; now she pats it dry. She goes quickly, slightly shivering, to the foot of the bed where a large, deep handbag is sitting. Out of this bag she takes a pair of pale pink panties, a pair of black tights, and a white bra decorated with a small pink flower between the contoured cups. Once having put these on, she goes back to the bathroom, still fluffing dry her dark, shoulder-length hair, and brings out a shiny maroon dress and a pair of maroon suede, thick-heeled shoes. She throws the dress over her head, pulls it down to about six inches above her knees, and doubles up her arms first behind her back and then over her shoulders to zip it up.

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She steps into the shoes and walks over to a large mirror above the bureau. The shiny material of her dress reflects erratic patches of light across the mirror's surface and across the ceiling, as she brushes her hair.

As the sky darkens, the bungalow on the northernmost property bordering Snake Pond is slowly covered with a fresh layer of snow. The wind has died down almost completely since sunset.

Now Yona is looking out through the small window panes in the front door of the bungalow. The falling snow makes it nearly impossible to see beyond the front steps; at the same time it begins to cover the few footprints scattered around the bungalow. Now she hurries back to the bedroom and looks out the window there. The trail through the woods has similarly been covered by new snow. There is no sign of movement outside, except that of the snow. Yona goes back to the front door, turning off the light in the hallway that runs from there to the bedroom. Now she is able to see beyond the edges of the property, all the way down to the huge flat surface of white, which is the pond.

4

Tom brushes away the snow from around the mailbox door and pushes down the black flag. Inside he finds a small package wrapped in brown paper and tied with brown twine, addressed in a familiar handwriting to: "Tom and Yona Tomar, Snake Pond, Wellfleet, Massachusetts." He puts the package into the wide pocket of his jacket and makes his way down the path to the edge of the frozen pond. Here and there the heels of his heavy boots struck against the gravel that covered the path underneath the snow. His footing became more secure once he stepped out onto the pond, since the surface, though slicker than the graveled pathway, was perfectly smooth and flat. Before starting off from the land's edge, Tom turned to try to locate a few landmarks. Already the house was nothing more than a gray blur, and the mail-

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box, now unrelieved by the tiny black flag, faded into the thick, swirling snow. Tom nonetheless pointed himself as best he could in the direction of the northern part of the pond and started walking.

Before him there was nothing but the snow. Shot down by vertical gusts of wind, it fell in dense sheets, like successive scrims on a circular stage. Near the surface of the fallen snow upward currents would turn these sheets over on themselves, so that little whirlwinds of snow blew around Tom's steadily advancing legs. His pace was a bit slower now, not because of any greater slickness at the surface, but because of the increasing wind and the gradually forming drifts. A very faint light, which emanated not at all from the now totally gray sky, was nonetheless pervasive in all directions, as if the snow itself were its source. But rather than making it easier to see through the snowstorm, it merely suggested alternate passages through the swirling currents where the snow was (illusorily) less thick. Like the contradictory natural light at dusk, this other light was confounding not just in its origin but in its effects as well. Whether it seemed to emanate from the hypothetical edges of the pond or from the snow itself, the ground ahead appeared to brighten with each step forward. Yet the step brought in fact an impression of withdrawal—as if the entire blizzard were a shattered mirror and stepping forward equaled the attaining of the (reflected) position just now held. Tom tried to keep to the straight line he had started out on, but the oddly obscuring brightness of the snow also hindered his detection of any kind of course marker, and the wind was able at his every step to alter his direction altogether. Without changing the position of his body to the slightest degree, Tom turned his head slowly and scanned the flecked blankness.

What can be seen in a white night snowstorm is clearer to the thinker than to the seer. For the latter sees white and night as more or less indistinguishable, snow and wind as catalysts to blindness. But the thinker thinks back to an old friend weeding on a frosty autumn evening. Like the thinker, this friend has for a moment thought rather than weeded, and

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the result is a deep ankle gash. On his way back from the first-aid shed he meets another weeder who tells him about children he saw playing behind a fence. The snow has already started to fall, and the second weeder, having given directions to the first, walks away in the direction of a low-flying helicopter that passes directly over the two at the moment of their meeting. The thinker's friend and object of thought starts out in the direction indicated by the other weeder, but never comes to the children or the fence. Instead, he comes up behind an open-air theatre where a drama seems to have just begun. He has the uncanny feeling that from where he is standing he is taking part in the drama; in any case, he knows the ending already. He goes around to the front and watches for a few minutes. The young, almost child-like principal female rushes from one side of the playing space to the other, delivering just a few disconnected lines and overstepping each time the limits of her last passage. There are no borders to this natural stage—only the imposed brilliance of the huge spotlights, which in fact dilate (and dilute) along with the actress's re-modeling of the playing space. The words, "I am the cruelest man," have not yet been spoken. Yet someone in the audience is heard to ask if the heroine goes mad in the end, and the weeder nods. He slowly wanders back through the thickening snow, looking for his pitchfork and the uneven line of uncut weeds.

Now Tom stops. Far off to his right he sees the dim outline of a figure moving irregularly over a single spot. By the movement, only barely perceptible, it seems like a man trying to lift a stone, to dig a ditch, or to uproot a stump. Is it the very end or the very beginning of the drama? The mirage-like perception plays along the flimsy border between received sensations and projected images. And yet this border, oddly delineated by the sourceless light, curving along coordinates in perpetual shift, always cuts through the one point of apparent presence.

The rest of Tom's body is now pointed in the same direction as his head. It is impossible to know, in the swirling snow, if he has turned his head back to the supposed northerly

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direction he had headed out in or if his feet have gradually pivoted on the ice to align themselves with the new direction of his head. Tom turns his head again from one extreme side to the other and can locate no other point of attachment for his eyes than the vaguely gesticulating figure of a man off in the distance. He heads off now in this direction, bending over slightly, since he is going straight into the wind. It is thus impossible for him to keep his eyes on his presumably fixed objective. The snow, until a few moments ago merely a screen opening and closing on all sides, now beats down directly across Tom's eyes. When he lifts his head momentarily, the figure seems to have become dimmer, further away rather than closer. After a few minutes Tom slows down; he has lost all sight of the figure. The snow continues swooping down across his eyes, then falling in a more placid and haphazard fashion to the ground.

Now Tom comes to a dead halt. Several yards off to his left is something that seems to be a human body lying in the snow. He goes quickly to the spot. He kneels over the body and shakes one shoulder. As he brushes away the newly fallen snow, dark red crusts of refrozen snow appear around the mid-section of the body. Tom grabs a wrist and squeezes it hard underneath a thick leather glove. It offers no resistance. He then turns the head toward him and, brushing the snow away from the eyes, pushes open one of the lids. Only the white of the eyeball appears. Tom pushes the lid shut.

The dead man's legs have already been covered by a layer of snow. All that can be seen below the bloodstained ice around his waist is one dark brown boot sticking out of the snow. The rest of the supine body is covered by a poncho made of thick, bright yellow canvas only partially covered by snow. To the right of and slightly above the stomach region there is a wide, irregular slash in the canvas from which the blood has flowed, melting much of the snow on the shiny yellow surface of the poncho. The interior fibers of the canvas, which show up slightly ragged along the edges of the slash, are dyed dark red. There is no more bleeding. The rest of the blood has been washed down across the stomach to be

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mixed with surrounding patches of ice, leaving a shining, irregular, yellow oval around the slash. The borders of this oval are tinted varying shades of red, according to the proportion of blood to melting snow. And these tinctures penetrate deep into the surrounding drifts, which offer no resistance.

Tom shifts back and forth for a few moments from one foot to the other. Now he kneels down again, takes off one of his own gloves, and sticks his hand gently through the rose-colored snow. The dead man's body barely quakes. Tom draws a wallet out of the dead man's back pocket. Inside are three calling cards embossed with the name "John Hardy" and a New York City address. In the billfold portion of the wallet there are three hundred-dollar bills, four twenty-dollar bills, three ten-dollar bills, and one one-dollar bill. Behind this there are cards—a driver's license, credit cards, and membership cards to the Republican Club of New York, to the Playboy Club, to the I. M. C. (Industrial Manufacturers of Cellophane) Club—all inscribed with the name Hardy.

Tom drops the wallet into his wide side-pocket, where it lodges itself against the little package wrapped in brown paper, and puts his glove back on. He begins looking around the body, stamping down the adjacent snow, which has been steadily accumulating. Not far from the body, off to the right, Tom's stamping foot, when drawn aside, reveals a spot of blood beneath the slick packed snow. He continues pressing down the snow in the same area and comes upon a few more such traces.

All sign of light has left the sky. The thick flakes of snow fall steadily out of an even grayness. The frozen pond is left with only the vaguely luminescent blankness of the snow. Tom keeps his eyes turned down toward the surface of the pond, but his feet no longer reveal any traces of blood. He keeps on walking, without seeing anything in any direction, until his foot meets with a sudden rise in the terrain. He looks up and sees the faint black trace of the pine branches that border directly on the pond at the eastern shore.

Tom turns quickly to his left and follows the shore that

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leads circuitously to the northern tip of the pond. He walks faster now and spreads his arms out slightly from his body to insure his balance. Off to his left he sees a piece of yellow canvas sticking out from the snow. The rest of the bulk, still recognizable as the body, is entirely covered by snow. Tom continues toward the north pond, walking now even faster. His arms bend at the elbows, and the package and the wallet jiggle against one another in his pocket. His steps are still high and measured in the apparent attempt to avoid as much friction as possible from the high drifts. His increased pace causes the falling snow to obstruct still more his vision. Tiny mounds of snow gather across each eyebrow. As Tom stretches out his left arm and bares the back of his wrist to wipe off his forehead, his left foot comes into contact with an icy underlayer of packed snow. Tom slips and falls headlong.

His gloved hands slide through the snow in an effort to stop his fall and the left one suddenly comes up against a hard object. Tom jumps up to his feet and looks down at the head of the supine body from which he has earlier brushed away the snow. The rest of the body has been covered by new snow, but by no means entirely, since the one boot still sticks up over the surface and parts of the yellow poncho around the slash are still visible. Tom jerks his head around in the direction from which he has just come. Then he swings his head back to the dead body before him. He bends over and brushes away all the snow from around the dead man's face. He jerks his head around again.

5

There was no clear outline of the frozen pond. The mounting snow leveled all points of relief, so that objects were distinguishable only by relative flatness. The borders of the pond thus dimly suggested themselves in the gradual rising of the banks against the pond's severe planar surface. At certain points even this vague contrast disappeared, as around the southern marsh areas where tall frozen weeds faded entirely

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into surrounding fields. The outline of the pond, very generally made out, took the form of a distorted "S" whose lower hook has been pulled down straight, a question mark drawn backwards without a dot.

The banks around the pond were, for the most part, covered by huge pines. The division of this forest land into four properties was marked by the four clearings situated irregularly around the pond and occupied by dwellings of various sorts. On the two narrow clearings near the edge of the eastern shore were small summer bungalows. These were completely dark inside. The house on the western shore, situated on the broadest curve of the pond, was a large two-story construction of white clapboard and gabled façades. Inside this house the fire still glowed deep blue. The fourth, located at the northernmost point of the pond, was an unpainted wood bungalow whose lines were simple and straight. Lights went on and off successively in its front and back rooms. Now and then there appeared at one of the lighted windows a woman's face that jerked quickly from one direction to the other.

The surface of the pond was repeatedly ruffled over. Strong winds, as if controlled by gravity, swept down and carved their movement into the impressionable fallen snow. But the thick falling snow persisted, as if controlled by a force other than gravity, and soon leveled the surface nearly to its original state of total uniformity. There were points of reference in the two prostrate masses, the one brought into relief by the toe of a boot sticking out from the snow, the other by a patch of yellow canvas. There was also the coming and going of the dim pond borders; there were the implied divisions of adjacent properties. But there was no more blood. Of all the disruptive and permanent elements, the blood was the first to yield to the snow's filling-in and leveling process, to be transformed into red eccentric networks that connected the two thick masses momentarily, then fixedly, with the snow. It had been some time now since red streams ran along the snow, first tracing paths of narrow, steaming trenches, then forging tunnels under the icy surface. Now this vital

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connection had itself been frozen and subsequently erased. Only the skeletal sketch of centrifugal circulation was left, and that merely hypothesized from above the surface. Now even the two dots with mass began gradually to dwindle and fade. One dark figure, the only mobile object across the entire frozen surface, tread a vacillating path between these two still points.

6

Tom follows his still perceptible tracks back toward the eastern shore. His steps are rapid, but his movements are clumsy, as if a numbness were overtaking his limbs. He doesn't fall. His feet keep to the frozen surface, shuffling snow between them as they slide along. The relatively clear old tracks are thus demolished one by one by this new uninterrupted trail of churned snow.

Tom makes fresh, poorly defined tracks toward what is now a slightly curved mound of snow, no longer relieved by the patch of yellow canvas. He quickly brushes the snow away. This body, though covered by the same sort of yellow poncho as the other body, is facing down in a somewhat doubled-up position, the left hip sticking up. Tom lifts the body from behind so that the torso leaves the ground; the red snow packed around the neck falls away. When he sees the face, deeply cut around the mouth and chin, he drops to his knees, grasps the body tightly around the chest, and presses his forehead against the back; the torso, momentarily cradled, then slips gradually out of his numbed arms and flops stiffly back to its prone position. Tom slowly gets up off his knees. Now he tries to push his friend's body all the way over onto its back, but it slides against the ice, as do Tom's feet. He grabs the left arm lodged against the belly and presses his bare fingers against the wrist. Tom is motionless. His one bared hand holds up the arm, which causes the left side of the body to rise slightly. Tom's glazed eyes stare straight ahead of him; snowflakes get hooked on his eye-

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lashes. Then he lets the arm go and sinks down against his bent legs.

Only the knife, guided by the human hand, can perform the transition from life to death in the desired manner. For this operation craftsmen are needed who combine the precision and skill of a surgeon with the speed of a pieceworker. Conditions must be optimal: slick surfaces imperil both skill and speed. No matter how clever the company heads are, the final product will be seriously below par if it lacks the hallmark of the human hand. Even the company's big export item, which doesn't pretend to effect life or death, represents a significant compromise solution in this respect: a giant locomotive that processes raw salt, packaged and labeled: "Someone will make 50 or 100 million with this." But other more ordinary products are distributed domestically to enterprising young men interested in starting a business of their own. There are packs of small pony-like animals that can be raised for meat. Each animal is labeled: "Only the knife, guided by the human hand." Over here are the wild hogs, carousing together behind reinforced railings. One prospective buyer rides up on horseback. As he dismounts to follow the herdsman around the hog corral, his horse spots the ponies and goes wild. The ponies, in turn, are so frantic at the sight of the raving horse that they burst out from behind the flimsy wooden gates and scatter over the fields toward town. The surgeon, who has been busy explaining to a group of apprentice pieceworkers the importance of how far and how deep the throat of a hog should be pierced, turns now toward the shrill sounds coming from the window. But he goes on: "A false stroke injures the meat product. And it must be done quickly—500 hogs per hour." With this, the pieceworkers bolt *en masse* and, joined by the prospective buyer, go after the ponies and the pursuing horse, which the company heads at first threatened to shoot. In town the pieceworker posse separates. As he walks alone along the borders of deserted factories, the buyer meets up with a little boy who points out a vacant lot around the bend. There he finds all the ponies lying dead and skinned. Men ride out. Men ride back. Very

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few contemplate this ultimate task, to perform the transition from life to death—in the desired manner.

Tom slowly gets up, puts his glove back on, and leans over the body, getting a grip on either side. He manages to lift the dead man slightly and then to turn him over onto his back. A hunting knife with an animal-hide handle sits out on the packed snow where the dead man was lying. On the flattened end of the handle are the initials R. D. D. Tom picks up the knife and drops it into his wide pocket without examining it. He bends over to free the right arm of the dead man, which has remained pinned under the body. Out of the dead man's clenched glove flutter several scraps of glossy paper. Tom gathers up these pieces, which seem to be parts of a torn photograph, and pulls out another whole photograph that has remained clenched in the glove.

The whole photo shows Yona standing on a boardwalk in front of a large Moorish-style facade with an arcade column rising directly behind her and a few dark store fronts to either side. Next to her, his right arm clasped around her shoulders, stands the other dead man, the one whose wallet contains the name "John Hardy." He is stooping slightly in order to place his head at approximately the same level as Yona's. His straw hat with a purple band around it is pushed back on his head, so that no shadows are cast across the length of his forehead, mottled with a fresh sunburn. Yona, wearing a light brown and yellow dress with thin shoulder straps and molded bust, is tilting her head slightly to the left, so that it leans against John Hardy's right shoulder. Her eyes are rolled up in the direction of his face, though in this position it would not be possible for her to see him. Because of Yona's proximity to John Hardy, her left arm is hidden behind him. It does not appear on John Hardy's left shoulder or around his waist. The facade behind the couple has the appearance of a mosque. The curve of one side in the right-hand corner of the photo begins to form what seems to be a minaret. The entire surface of the facade is raised with geometric designs that cast perfect, though incomplete and depthless, imitations of themselves with their shadows. These designs are cut in horizontal rows

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that slope upwards with the rising of the facade's one visible border. Miniature replicas of the same designs are repeated in straight horizontal rows across the arcade column. To the left of the column, entirely in shadows, are large windows filled with various fancy candies. Bright pink ribbons are visible on top of straw baskets covered with yellow cellophane, as well as huge chocolate rabbits and goats. To the right of the column, beyond and behind the couple in the foreground, are tinted windows, which contain even larger baskets filled with quantities of oranges, bananas, and grapefruits. Besides the ribbons similar to those in the other windows, there is also decorative green straw around the edges of these baskets.

Tom continues staring at this photo, then drops it into his wide pocket and opens up his left hand which holds the fragments of the other photo. There are seven pieces, two rather large rectangular pieces, two more or less square pieces, one long narrow piece, and two small square pieces. Tom juggles the fragments around on the packed snow. The two large pieces fit together easily because of the continuous form to the right side of each that suggests the body of a woman. Tom places the long piece below these two, so that the lower legs and feet of the body fall into place. The other four pieces quickly form, as Tom moves them around against the three larger pieces, the right-side border of the photo; this part shows a long red curtain and some sort of raised platform on which the elaborately dressed figure is standing. The photo now seems complete except for a long piece at the top that would include the upper left border and the woman's head. As it stands, the seven fragments show a woman wearing a long white, sparkling dress, which is split at the knees and bust, and standing on a curtained platform or stage of some kind. Her hands are placed solidly against her waist, slightly toward the back, as if her bent arms that form right angles were somehow helping support the rest of her body. Her feet, in high-heeled satin shoes, are spread apart.

Tom gathers up these fragments and drops them into his wide pocket. He rifles through the snow surrounding the body of his dead friend, but finds nothing else. As he turns

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around, he notices some small frozen red lumps that have been uncovered by his own maneuvers next to the body. He cups his hand over his eyes and looks out in the direction of the other dead body. The thick snow has already half covered his last set of tracks. Tom glances back slowly once more at the body behind him. Now he begins walking back over the tracks he has recently made. He walks lightly, kicking away several layers of new snow now and then to either side. These kicks reveal at times more traces of frozen blood. By repeatedly doubling back, Tom establishes a path of fairly connected blood traces between the two bodies. When he again reaches the first dead man, John Hardy, he similarly looks through the snow surrounding the body. Then with one foot he pushes the body over onto its face. Tom scrapes the edge of his boot across the surface of the packed snow. Near where the dead man's head has just been lying, somewhat below the snow's surface, is a small glossy piece of paper. Tom drops instantly to his knees and picks out from the snow what is clearly the missing fragment of the torn photo. The left side of the long-shaped piece includes the upper left-hand border of the photo. At the other extremity is a very white, heavily made-up face with thick, shiny red hair. The eyebrows and eyelashes are painted a dark brown. The lips, which suggest the form of a nascent pucker, are bright pink. The eyes themselves, dark brown, are fixed in a stare that seems out of step with the expression on the lips. Tom holds this fragment up to his own eyes and squints through the falling snow. He suddenly sinks down against his bent legs and, letting his arms drop to his sides, utters a sound that is all breath and no voice, but which is nonetheless articulated: "Roger!"

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Lines

lines which are the imitation of imagined veins

passing thru my quivering city

"*your* city?"

"New York?"

"quivering?"

3 suspicious characters
in the hallway
one making a
costume change
into a white sequined
bathing suit

"Don't be afraid, man"

all this is
second hand
as told to me
by the man
I live with

all this imagined
wired
torn
& frayed

living with pride & dignity
rent, telephone, lighting paid

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Tom Clark

At Malibu

Kowabunga! The amoeba was
mountainous.
Venusian burgers were sailing out
of broken windows
onto my plate. The Fantastic
Baggys were playing.
Down on the corner
of Tubular Boulevard
and Transistor-in-the-Back-of-the-Head Avenue,

near the approach
to the Gaping Maw Freeway,

the 6-to-8 plus
foot waves
were coming in like gangbusters
out back of the
Bar-B-Q Shack.
Jan & Dean
& the Rip Chords
were playing
on portables
in the All-Nite
Board Shoppe;

chill were the shakes
and flat the tops.

A blue Merc cooked out of the light.

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The cars were lined up
like igloos
in front of the
Tastee Freeze.

Greasy smoke was
rising from the
Taco Bell, much as from
the La Brea Tar Pits.

Placid grew the mucoid
plugs of the beauty contestants.

"I'm bugged at my old man."
"Trig pisses me off."

They were listening to
Danny & the Juniors
on incredible car radios
that picked up 1962.

The history majorette
in the Sting Ray
wore a locket
with a tiny picture
of the La Brea Tar Pits

'tween her round blond
boobies.

She waved & winked
as I walked across
the parking lot
of the Howard Johnson's.

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Paul Revere & the Raiders
were vooming
out of the tape deck
of a Land Rover
on the entryway.

Soon,
gleaming up at me
from a chinawhite plastic plate
was the oily yellow mucilage
of a machine-fried egg.

Then a spatial cliff
loomed up before me
like a breakfast of grey rock

and spanked my ass.

I vommed up a string
of what looked like bird shit,
and cried out
to the ripped-up air:
"What Me Worry?"

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Joanne Kyger

Five Poems

June 7. To get a head start

Yea, but I'm too old
Yea, but I'm growing too old
To wait around this long

Nobody wants to sit with me

Forgive this interlude for a while: I became infinitely glamorous and careless, like the best memory, of past loves.

I often tell women's secrets to men

It was open, in the clear gray, morning. Babies cries, and a dog barks, birds shrill from the top of the trees.

I'm going to run away from all this. I am going to enter into another dimension.

Oh my little head and hope. I am projected ahead. I will realize the continuum from the past. I will not be abusive, I am smitten in glory.

I am full of hopeful rushing. On into the high out rocking waves.

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June 14, 1972. Wednesday

When I used to focus on the worries, everybody
was ahead of me, I was the bottom
of the totem pole,
a largely spread squat animal.

How about a quick massage now, he said to me.
I don't think it's cool, I replied.
Oh, said he, after a pause, I should have waited
for you to ask me.

The waves came in closer and closer.

When I fall into the gap of suspicion I am no longer there.

In this world that has got closed over by houses
and networks, I fly out
from under the belly. Life's dizzy crown
of whirling lights, circles this head. Pure
with wonder, hot
with wonder. The streets become golden. All
size increases, the colors glow, we are in myth.

We are in easy understanding.
Scarcely talking, thoughts pass between us.
It is memory. As I search to find
this day's sweet drifting. The fog out to sea, the wind.

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7.7.72

Drained into yellow gold. It was easier to fantasize "now" than
wait, people-ing it with my own favorite mate. It is a world rich with possibilities, but slim in actualization. Oh my sweet baby dumpling, what do you want for dinner. What cuddly sweet thing
can I cook for you. Ummm good. Ummm good.

7.13.72

Mysterious light lavender comes thru the gold.
I am so locked out without sound.
This day lightly perfumed. The walls come up higher.
Delayed, Delayed
I am delighted in the freedom of perfection of what comes up to me.
Far away,
the quest is always endless, and my sore satisfaction, limited. He takes his pleasure when he wants it. I am embittered from the battle, the loss of my private connection which bespeaks love,
the mess that lays around from intellect's sell-out.

7.14

all of a sudden
the kindness
before the heart
doubts
not the doubting
but the *sure*
I mean more meant
before attraction

7.15

Pedro.

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Hello
What's going on with this surface.

How much have I *earned* the things which please me.
Off in the breeze. It's a little windy
today.

I read Jack Kerouac's Big Sur. Right there, he was taking me along, indeed I felt very familiar. His head under the kitchen stove. Would you say that again. Yes indeed.

.

So tired. Go Away Go Inside Forget time.

Until blue sky whistles
wheww wheww wheww

Until
The wood sighs under me. I am under no mobile restriction.

.

These are no longer mysteries to me. I became a shining red presence in the dark corner of the room

(Cursory descriptions. When I say these are no longer mysteries)
I imply a broader, free way of viewing that brings me pleasure &
acceptance, and isn't afraid of being toppled backwards from indecision. I held on thru being tough.

to 7/31

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August. Wednesday

I spend time trying to get the small change, the sweet
stashes of food, from the desk of the secretary, my boss.
So in the world of occupation did I always
think of myself as hired, in an office.
Oh! Yellow Jacket on tobacco can.
Oh! plant that needs water, I bring it to you.
Oh! yellow jacket I put a glass over you and take you outside.
I am smit with the sadness of no future
the sweet stabbing sadness of one person
my loneliness with myself

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Between Sleep and Waking

Georges Perec

I

At first the darkness sometimes forms the vague outline of an ace of spades: from a point in front of you two lines recede, diverge and, after tracing a vast curve, turn back towards you.

Later it becomes an ocean, a black sea over which you sail, as if your nose were the point or rather the stem of a gigantic steamship. Everything is black. No night, no darkness, the entire world is black, intrinsically black as on a photographic negative, and the only whiteness, or perhaps grayness, is in the surge your passage raises on each side of your nose, along your eyes, which are perhaps the sides of the ship, where formerly the ace of spades had figured as if in mere prelude to this wake, the whitish, undulating trail that you cut in front of you as you glide over the black water. The water encompasses you on all sides, a black, motionless sea, extraordinarily smooth, lacking even phosphorescence, and yet you feel that you could detect every detail, the slightest cloud if there were a sky, the merest shoal if there were an horizon. But there is only sea, and you are all stem cutting without effort, sound, or tremor the deep white tracks of your way, like a share ploughing up a field.

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Soon, however, someplace overhead, as if an inset, as if a screen appeared and a motion picture negative were projected on it, there is the same ship only now seen from above, in its entirety, and as for you, you are on the deck leaning over the railing or rather the gunnel, in a somewhat romantic attitude. For a long time the double image remains absolutely precise; and indeed if there is any one thing that irritates, that bothers you, it's that you can no longer manage to tell whether first of all you are the stem all by itself, raising white waves as it glides over the sea, and subsequently, almost simultaneously, some such thing as the consciousness of being this stem, which is to say the entire ship overhead on which you are the motionless passenger who is leaning from the deck in a slightly romantic attitude; or whether, on the contrary, there is first of all the entire ship gliding over the black sea with you, its only passenger, leaning against the gangway, and then a single detail inordinately magnified of this ship, the stem that divides the billows and raises on either side two waves—dense, white, but perhaps too definite in their contours to be really waves, they are more undulations, effects of drapery, with something about them rather stately, almost slowed down.

For a long time the two ships—the part and the whole, your stem nose and your steamship body—sail in consort without giving you any chance to dissociate them: you are at once the stem and the ship and yourself on the ship. Then a first contradiction occurs, but it is perhaps only an optical illusion ascribable to differences of scale and perspective: it appears to you that the ship is moving slowly, more and more slowly, perhaps a little as if you saw it from a greater and greater distance, from higher and higher up; and yet you, leaning on the gunnel, do not grow any smaller at all, you still remain as visible as ever; and as far as the stem is concerned, it moves faster and faster, it is no longer gliding but shoots over the water, like a motorboat or even an outboard, no longer an ocean liner at all.

At this point, and here things become much worse, as if you knew, perhaps by experience, that what is in the process

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of taking shape is the beginning of the end, since you will never be able to stand the intensity of what is foreshadowed for more than a few moments, for more than a few seconds, even though nothing as yet has been revealed except, perhaps, a premonitory sign at the most, a token whose meaning was not even certain, and whose elucidation you await in the vain hope that everything will stay blurred for as long as possible, because you know already that the moment of awakening is about to lay hold of you, it's precisely your impatience that has brought it on and every effort you make to delay it only speeds its onset;—at this point, as it does every time, there emerges, not slowly enough, the feeling at once thrilling and dismal, wonderful and heartbreaking, from the start too precise and becoming very soon an almost painful throb: the absurd certainty—or, instead, not yet quite absurd but sure to become absurd—that this is a true memory, exact in every detail: the sea was black, the ship made slow headway through the narrow channel, projecting sheaves of white foam along its sides, you were leaning over the railing of the promenade deck in the slightly romantic attitude adopted by all passengers looking at sea gulls while they take the air; you experienced the same feeling that you now experience, and nevertheless you experience no feeling now other than the perilous, the ever more perilous one of knowing that such a memory is at once impossible and ineradicable.

Later, much later—you may have woken up several times, dozed back to sleep several times, you have turned on your right side, on your left side, you have lain on your back, lain face down, perhaps you have even turned on the light, perhaps smoked a cigarette—later, much later, sleep becomes a target, no, it's rather you who become sleep's target. It's a widening, intermittent focus. In front of you, or more exactly in front of your eyes, sometimes a little to the left, sometimes a little to the right, never at the center, a myriad of little white dots gradually draw together, finally assuming some cat-like shape, the profile of a panther's head, which moves forward, grows larger as it bares two sharp fangs, then

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disappears, giving way to a luminous spot that broadens, turns into a rhombus, a star, and swoops down on you, missing you at the last second as it goes by on your right. The phenomenon recurs several times at regular intervals—nothing at first, then faintly luminous dots, a panther's head in outline, filled out, growing larger, roaring, baring two sharp fangs; afterwards a ball of light that heads towards you, just misses you, passing so close that you almost thought you had touched, felt, and heard it; then again nothing, for a long time—white dots, the panther's head, the star that swells and brushes against you.

Then, for a long time, nothing; or else, sometimes, later, somewhere, something like a white sun exploding...

II

The meeting of eye and pillow gives birth to a mountain, a fairly gentle slope forming a quarter circle (or more precisely the lesser arc of a circle) that stands out in the foreground, darker than the remaining space. This mountain isn't interesting; it's normal. For the time being your mind is absorbed by a task that you must perform but that you are unable to define exactly; it seems to be the sort of task that is scarcely important in itself and that perhaps is only the pretext, the opportunity, of making sure you know the rules: you imagine, for example, and this is immediately confirmed, that the task consists of sliding your thumb or even your whole hand onto the pillow. But is doing this really your concern? Don't your years of service, your position in the hierarchy, exempt you from this chore? This question is plainly much more important than the task itself, and there is nothing to help you solve it, you didn't think that so much later you would have to account for things in this way. Besides, on further reflection you realize that the problem is still more complicated: it isn't a matter of knowing whether or not you should slide your thumb in a manner befitting your rank, your duties, your seniority, but rather of this: sooner or later,

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in any event, you will have to slide your thumb up, but on top of the pillow if you have sufficient seniority, underneath if you haven't, and of course you have no notion of your seniority, which seems considerable but perhaps not considerable enough. Perhaps they have even picked a moment to ask you precisely this question when no one, not even the most upright of judges, would be able unquestioningly to assert that you have or have not got sufficient seniority?

The question could also be asked about your feet or thighs. It in fact means nothing: the real problem is one of contacts. There are theoretically two kinds of contact: between your body and the sheets, as in the case of your left thigh, your right foot, your right forearm, part of your belly—a contact that is fusion, osmosis, liquefaction; and between your body and itself, where flesh meets flesh, where the left foot is crossed over the right foot, where the knees meet, where your elbow ventures against your stomach—these contacts being sharp, hot or cold, or hot and cold. Obviously it's possible with hardly any risk to reverse the whole operation and assert that, on the contrary, the left foot is under the right foot, the right thigh under the left thigh.

What is most clear in all this is that obviously you are not lying down, either on your right side or on your left side, legs slightly bent, arms embracing the pillow, but that you are hanging head downwards like a hibernating bat or, more, like an overripe pear on a pear tree: which means that at any moment you may fall, something that in fact strikes you as not particularly bothersome, since your head is perfectly shielded by the pillow; but you are duty bound to escape this danger, even if it is minute. But if you review the means at your command, it does not take you long to realize that the situation is more serious than you first reckoned, if only in that loss of horizontality is rarely conducive to sleep. Therefore you must make up your mind to fall, even though you foresee that this will scarcely be enjoyable (one never knows when the fall will end) but above all you don't know how to go about falling, it's only when you aren't thinking about

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it that you start to fall, and how can you not think about it since it so happens you *are* thinking about it? It's something no one has ever seriously faced and that nevertheless is of some consequence: there ought to be texts on the subject, authoritative texts that would enable one to deal with these situations, far commoner than is generally believed.

Three quarters of your body have taken refuge in your head. Your heart has settled in your eyebrow, where it has made itself perfectly at home, pulsating like a thing alive, with, at the most, a very slightly exaggerated acceleration. You are obliged to perform a roll call of your body, to verify the wholeness of your limbs, your organs, your entrails, your mucous membranes. You would certainly like to rid your head of all these lumps that encumber and weigh it down, and at the same time you are pleased at having saved as much as you could, for everything else is lost, you have no more feet, no more hands; your calf has quite melted away.

All this is more and more complicated. First you would have to remove your elbow, and in the space thus vacated you could place at least part of your belly, continuing in this manner until you were more or less reconstituted. But it's frightfully difficult: some parts are missing, of others there are two, others have swollen to inordinate size, others put forward utterly insane territorial claims. Your elbow is more elbow than ever (you had forgotten that anything could be so thoroughly elbow), a nail has replaced your hand. And of course it's always at that very moment that the tormentors decide to intervene. One sticks a blackboard eraser in your mouth, another stuffs cotton in your ears; several pit sawyers have started working in your sinuses; a pyromaniac sets fire to your stomach, sadistic tailors squeeze your feet, cram too small a hat on your head, force you into too tight a coat and use a necktie to strangle you; a chimney sweep and his accomplice have let a knotted rope into your windpipe which,

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in spite of their praiseworthy efforts, they are unable to extract.

They are there nearly every time. You know them well. It's almost reassuring. If they're around, sleep isn't far away. They will make you suffer a little, then get fed up and leave you in peace. They hurt you, it's true, but you keep towards your pain—as towards all the other feelings you discern, all the thoughts crossing your mind, all the impressions you receive—an attitude of complete detachment. Without astonishment you see yourself astonished, without surprise surprised, without pain assaulted by the tormentors. You wait for them to calm down. You relinquish to them every organ they want. From afar you see them wrangling over your belly, your nose, your throat, your feet.

But often—so often—this is the ultimate trap. The worst then comes to pass, emerging slowly, imperceptibly. At first everything is calm—too calm; normal—too normal. Everything seems set never to move again. But after that you are aware, you begin to be aware, with a certainty more and more relentless, that you have lost your body—no, rather you see it, not far away from you, but you will never be one with it again.

You are no more than an eye. A huge, steady eye that sees everything, your limp body as well as yourself, the beholder beheld, as if it had turned completely round in its socket and without uttering a word was gazing on you, your inside, your dark, empty, sea-green, startled, helpless inside. It looks at you and pins you down. You will never stop seeing yourself. You are unable to do anything, you are unable to escape yourself, you are unable to escape your gaze, you will never be able to: even if you managed to fall asleep so deeply that no shock, no summons, no searing pain could wake you up, there would still be this eye, your eye, which will never shut, which will never fall asleep. You see yourself, you see yourself seeing youself, you watch yourself watching yourself. Even if you woke up, your vision would abide, identical, un-

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changeable. Even if you managed to accumulate thousands, or thousands of thousands of eyelids, there would still be, behind them, this eye to see you. You are not asleep, but sleep will not return again. You are not awake and you will never wake up again. You are not dead, and not even death could bring you deliverance.

Translated from the French by Harry Mathews

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Alice Notley

Poem

The havoc-caused
soul occurs not
recovers yet the
treatment bought
with submission
fiddles and
caricatures con-
tains nothing but
heal intoxication
(courage is in-
toxication) wide
& embedded
stalactite and
fall of snow... so

He winds a sheet around me
which must be sarong & song
He asks can I protect myself
I say I'm aware of my self-
inviolability he says
he means can I grease a car
for everyone must run a race
in the body's own running place

Running's itself's pure pleasure
I begin to overtake myself
and suddenly I was first
at the end of the race
along with everyone else

For we are all in college to learn to Marry:

the winding dragon of night
and horses of day and humming-
birds motes of light and the
dragon of the night:

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in black dress will be the lady
in a silver vest or it's black
against which looms the lighter
black tree loom.

One steps
on a rusty nail, disbelieves
in lockjaw one thinks forever without a thought

telephone poles & railroad tracks
the same and the same and the
same silver clack telephone wires the
luminous lines of the world
on which I walk
bare feet in fog
foggy-footed spider See
the spider toe-dance on its
tender tendril legs across
my hand shimmering mote
with room comfort room service
silver artifice & uprightness
an arrow's a lily a lily's an arrow

blank blank yellow & red blank

...I weep I read novels
Someday I'll count all your freckles
bagatelles of transient experience
A different one always dies
whose name seems forgotten a sacred
thread blows away
my rags of righteousness

are all your heroism your social charm your
wit your victories on land
on sea?
Style he says is the ultimate morality
of mind
Stick cinnamon is 84 cents

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O Turmeric
of use in mustard chow-chow piccalilli
sauces where the color the COLOR
yellow is thought desireable!
for that is life, to blaze with color.

One ignores the gossip
rounds the turn
dances & ducks & jabs
& Bites the Blade. Pleasant days.
There's a tone-free bullet
Someone cycles away

something strums
not tree not airplane
not seen
I stop
not entirely to pieces

I flow
in litter of sunflower seeds.

"The whole path of a material particle
between any limits of time must achieve some
perfection worthy
of the providence of God"
Everything I have has an earwig in it

which will make light of sacred things,
a genuine form being seen

a light and things

some kisses being exchanged
amid the whirl of the maddening dance.

Joy now is high-wire joy.

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Edwin Brock

Prototypes

1.

King George the Fifth
looked like my grandfather
and felt as close

when he died
I walked the streets
staring at houses

and their faces
to see if people
looked the same and

their homes still stood.
For a week
we were on the brink

of war or an earthquake
and when my mother
laughed at me

I abandoned her
to God's anger
or soldiers from the Tower.

King George the Fifth
was my first and last
king, his children

and their children
were never properly introduced
and I ignored them.

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2.

My father played the piano
with one finger of his right hand
and the fist of his left

he laughed at Gracie Fields
Max Miller and was away from home
for weeks at a time

when he died I cried
for my mother
and forgot.

I have never mastered the art
of becoming my father:
I have three children

pale jackets, suede shoes
and laugh at comedians
I do not admire

I stay away from home
for weeks at a time
but I do not resemble him

when he came home
he brought himself with him
and sat down

when I arrive
I hit the piano with both hands
and nothing happens.

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3.

Britannia glowed
from Empire Day
all the way to Barry Road

a big-girl jumped over
her skipping rope
and walked away on her hands

on Saturday night
I jumped over a saxophone
and ran among mad skirts

by Sunday I had married
the girl next door and all the saxophones
played the Last Post.

4.

On my bedside table
is a triptych
of a king, a father and a wife

at night I sleep
with one eye open
hoping to surprise them

I am wrong:
their dead faces
fill all my gaps

and nothing happens
except I contain them,
father-king and dancing wife

they have killed my ear
for saxophones
and nobody, not even

Fred Astaire, could take
his toes to a brass band
playing a requiem mass.

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The Chamber Music Evening

Phillip Lopate

I

The light that dripped through the Venetian blinds was so inviting that the doctor, waking up, wanted to lick it like caramel syrup.

He slid away from the sheets, lowered his naked feet onto the rug and put on a flannel bathrobe with the idea of following this light out the door. Marlene was still asleep, face downward. Her broad shoulders had slipped past the lime-colored sheets.

He overcame the urge to study her asleep, knowing from past experience this would lead him to melancholy thoughts.

In the front hall, by the umbrella stand, the sunlight had made a sailboat out of a triangle and three parallel lines on the brown cork tiles.

Werner Hartmann stepped outside and heard the birds, the buds, a truck laboring uphill, gnashing its gears. All was blissful across the United States. Good day. Then he remembered the chamber music gathering that night, and felt a contraction, a pinch at the heart.

It was all because Geary, their violinist, had phoned the day

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before to say he couldn't make it. He had to pick up his wife's brother at the airport. Werner was upset; he had been looking forward to playing the Brahms piece and thought Geary was taking the group too casually. Either they would have to postpone the evening or else play trios. Then Annette, his oldest daughter, volunteered. Werner didn't know if she could handle it. She was only thirteen, a willing but not noticeably gifted musician. Furthermore, she had the habit of sticking her tongue out when she played. Her violin teacher had warned her he would not allow her to be in the music school recital unless she cured herself of this ridiculous habit.

Well, this would be a good experience for Annette. He phoned the others for their opinion and they thought it was a wonderful solution.

So today Annette was going to have her debut.

2

"Pick me up!"

Terry scooted over to her father as soon as she saw him in the garden. Annette, who had been playing a game of tether ball with her younger sister, followed chastely behind, her chinked eyes frowning from sunshine as she waited beneath the rope-swing and the dogwood tree.

"Pick me up!" demanded Terry.

"There goes my gardening," said Hartmann. He was more amused than put out. His chest hairs tickled Terry as he lifted her with his bony arms. She got right up close to his face to see it as if for the first time: the crusty brown pores, flabby lips and crag of a nose with its nostril hairs at the entrance of the cave, and the omniscient eyes, alien, watery blue, that looked into hers from a distance that could never be crossed. "Hee-hee," she laughed apprehensively.

Higher she rose, and now it was perfect. She giggled and her cheeks bloomed. "Once...twice...thrice!" he pretended to drop her, and let her gently down.

"Again. This time a piggyback ride."

From her kitchen window Marlene Hartmann laughed to herself at Terry's directness. Pick me up! She knew just what

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she wanted, that girl. Heaven for her would be to swing in Daddy's arms forever. But see how Annette hung back, already with that adult's look of missing out. Maybe she thought she was getting too old for Daddy's pickmeups.

Werner had a tightening sensation and immediately straightened his shoulders for Terry to slide down.

"That's enough," he grumbled.

Terry pulled a long face.

"No more now, no more."

"Why don't you give Annette a turn?" Marlene called from the back door. "I think she wants a piggy ride too!"

The girls were stunned that their mother had been "spying" on them. Hearing her tensely gay accent Annette made a sarcastic face. In fact she was glad someone had noticed her hovering and hovering, with her arms folded across her chest like a crushed bird.

"Well come here Annie! Soon you'll be too heavy for me. One two three four Alley Oop!"

Annette closed her eyes and went limp. She thought she smelled the white dogwood blossoms growing on the higher branches.

"Come on, let's finish the tether ball game, Terry. I'm winning 18–7."

"Okay, but one more pickmeup." Terry ran to her father's knees and hugged them.

"Kids, let your father have some peace. I'm sure he doesn't want you in his hair all Sunday."

"We were *going*, mother," Annette said.

"Well I should say so. Gosh, what a tone of voice!" Mrs. Hartmann said.

Her husband waved to her. He looked so charming in his new goatee. She fancied him as a German courtier: distinguished, cultured, handsome to the ladies, a shade of melancholy. She remembered his face when it had been suffering but now that vulnerability was losing ground to the warm fatherly fuzz of his beard, and a good thing too; perhaps she could relax and stop worrying about his discontent—begin

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to think of her own satisfaction more.

"Breakfast is in five minutes, okay?" Marlene called out.

"Très bien."

3

At breakfast Hartmann had it on the tip of his tongue to suggest that Annette practice. But Terry was keeping everyone in stitches with her babble and he decided not to darken the mood. He would suggest it later on, but casually.

Werner scanned his subscriber brochure of radio listings. Grieg, Prokofiev, Schubert... Sunday fare. There would be an interesting discussion at 4:30. By that time they would probably have left for a walk.

He switched on the program: it was his habit to leave this station on all day Sunday, good or bad. Then he sat in his favorite chair and reached by instinct for the new periodicals. There were the scholarly journals that he told himself he should catch up with, but instead he opened a magazine that had nothing to do with his field. It was a journal of political thought which he noticed seemed every year to get fatter and more infrequent.

The double issue at hand was a collection of essays on the blue-collar worker. Turning pages, sensing the tone, Hartmann felt an older brother's protective indulgence for the Left. There was something so touching about these writers with their *gymnasium* faith in correct analysis; their lyrical trills when they came to expose the true enemy; their controlled anger, hissing underneath the dialectics like a delayed fuse under a rock.

He remembered now his Communist days, the general meetings at Köln, standing up in back to hear, the perennial stray dogs moving among the crowd. The first classes he gave as an instructor, all that came back, and suddenly the memory of the Gestapo ringing his house, and his walking calmly through the troops with an earflapped cap over his head. Was it his blue eyes that deceived them? Or the worker's cap? To walk past Death as casually as going through a turnstile, when

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so many, so many he knew were unlucky...

They had hidden him in the cellar of a rectory for a year. In Holland. A low-ceilinged room lit by naphtha lamp, with nothing to read but sermons. It was not a bad year. His mind reached a sort of stillness. He would have accepted whatever happened to him. Gestapo or liberation. He thought that if he ever survived he would like to give up university life and earn his bread with his hands, as a bookbinder or gardener.

And now look! He had turned up like a rabbit in a strange country and was making good money for an intellectual. This country respected European brains. They paid you well to spin out theories. He enjoyed the American comfort of life, the natural grandeur of the forests and the continental sunsets. But deep in his heart he longed for some strong conversation. The people who surrounded him seemed like white bread, inexcusably bland.

4

Hartmann had had a puzzling research career. He had always been interested in unexplained phenomena, those stepchildren considered beneath the attention of medical science. Faith healing and the laying of hands engaged him for a time. Then ritual fasting. Then he moved on to the ability to discern color through touch. Now he was investigating placebos.

It was not that he believed any of these approaches should necessarily be adopted. No, what excited him was just the delusional, the imaginative underside of the idea. When this had faded he let the research slide, not without leaving behind a slim article arguing that the evidence was "inconclusive" while chiding the medical establishment for its dogmatic neglect of the subject.

His more powerful emigrant friends were perplexed but continued to help him get grants. They still believed he would make a contribution. Certain other colleagues welcomed his conversation at lunch and appreciated his skepticism, but now there was the tiniest condescension accorded someone whose obsession with integrity begins to seem part of a pattern of

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self-defeatism. Poor Hartmann! He lacked the blind spot, the childishness necessary for deep enthusiasm. Whenever people urged him to publish more in the scientific journals, or better yet, write a book, Hartmann always answered:

"Why should I add to the rubbish in print? The world has seen enough half-baked nonsense already."

He was fifty. He still had fifteen years to come up with a good idea.

5

"Oh no Regina you peed all over the floor. Stop that—bad dog. Look at this flood! And I just mopped up half an hour ago."

"I'll mop up, mother."

"You bet you will. I would appreciate it. I must go to Shopwell for tonight.—Come, out of the kitchen, Regina. Such bad manners to pee on the floor. Are you so old and senile you can't hold it in?" Marlene dragged the dog through the kitchen door and then stopped back in the living room.

"What do you think would be nice to serve them? I was planning some ice cream and fruit. How does that sound?"

"Fine."

"What kind of fruit, do you think?"

"Mhm..." he pointed to the fireplace.

"Maybe a salad would be better. A nice garden salad on a summer night?"

"A salad would be excellent too."

"What kind of salad? Fish or ham?"

A bird was warbling nearby, the same repeated call: two long ascending notes and eight short pips.

"Fish," said Hartmann.

"Then I'll have to go buy some. I have ham in the house but no fish."

"Use ham instead, Leni, it makes no difference. It's silly for you to go out of your way."

"Not at all! I was planning to go to Shopwell anyway. Did you see how Regina leaked all over this morning?"

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"I heard..." Werner began warmly. But he realized he had nothing to add.

"Disgusting, hmm?" said Marlene with a flirtatious laugh that puzzled him and reminded him of something. What was it? he wondered.

Probably she just wanted to make contact.

A moment later his wife was back.

"Black bread! That's what Klausner likes. I could pick up some fresh warm pumpernickel at the bakery in Georgetown. Warm black bread and sweet butter. Mmmm... That's lovely. That will be a treat for all of us."

"Ya. Sit down and rest for a minute."

"I don't have time to rest," Marlene laughed ironically. "Who's going to make lunch? And someone has to see that Terry gets her room clean."

Werner's brows were furrowed, as if trying hard to understand.

"And then I must do a wash so you can have shirts tomorrow."

"Terry!" he called out.

"Wait a second."

"No waiting, you come here when Daddy calls," said Marlene.

Terry wobbled in on high heels and an old-fashioned floppy hat. "Excuse, gutt afternoon, I am just goink for a valk. Could you tell me von der vich vay to the zooo?"

"Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" asked Werner, bending down to her level.

"Natürlich," Terry rolled her eyes.

"Gosh! She's such a scream when she puts on that German," said Marlene. "Where did you get those *earrings*?"

"Excuse, ein moment," Annette ran in, "this lady has stolen my purse!"

"No, I want to be Grandma," Terry whined.

"You can be Grandma in a minute, I promise," said Annette.

"No, I'm the only Grandma, look!" Terry said, and stuck two throw pillows under her shirt.

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"What a riot!—Hey kids, your room must be upside down with those costumes. Go and tidy up."

"My room is perfectly neat."

"Terry, go and clean right now," her father commanded.

"Awl right."

Terry sloshed off in her high heels.

"And you too, Annette."

"Aber der *my* room is zo clean you could lick off der floor."

"Stop it now. The joke is wearing thin."

"Boy," Annette muttered. It was a curious thing, this business of jokes wearing thin. Sometimes they could go on with the joking for a long, long while, and both parents would be laughing; and then suddenly they would say it had gone too far.

Presently Mrs. Hartmann left the living room. Annette sat down on the fireplace stones, looking into the grating. Then she reached for her novel and opened it into her lap. She wore a brown wraparound skirt and a heather sweater. Her bosom was already well-developed.

"What are you reading?" Annette asked her father.

"An article on American factories."

"Is it good?"

"Mm, fair ... What are you reading?" he asked politely.

"*Wuthering Heights*."

"Didn't you finish that yet?"

"I've read it twice. I like it."

Werner returned to his article.

"I'm reading it again for a book report," explained Annette.

"When you finish maybe you can try something different. Have you tried *Arrowsmith?*"

"Who's that by?"

"Sinclair Lewis," Werner said with subdued irritation.

"Oh, right. Didn't you bring that to me once from the library?"

"I did, and you let it sit around for three weeks."

"I had to read another book for school. *Microbe Hunters*. If you bring it again I promise I'll read it."

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"No, I'm not getting it out for you. This time you get it out yourself," Werner said coldly.

Annette shrugged. She returned to her book, and he to his magazine. She read another chapter, though it was difficult to concentrate.

"There are books in the house already that you could read. Have you looked at those short story collections in the bookcase?"

"Uh huh. I couldn't get into them," said Annette.

"De Maupassant you couldn't get into?!"

"Which one was he?"

Werner almost lost his temper. Was she purposely being obtuse with that flippant tone of hers? Maybe he was wasting his time trying to educate her. He looked at the article—to return to it would be the most inviting course. "Bring me the volume of short stories from the bookcase."

Annette obeyed immediately. "The De Maupassant or the *250 Great Short Stories*?"

Werner reflected. "The *250 Great Short Stories.*"

The book was hardbound and very heavy. Hugging it against her chest like a leaded anchor, Annette felt she was going underwater. She meekly placed it on the end table by his arm. Hartmann opened it to the contents page. His eye ran down the listing, and the sight of some old friends gave him comfort and professional pleasure.

"Get me a pencil, please. I'll check off the ones I think are good."

She fetched a pen for him from the dining room address book.

"Conrad... De Maupassant... Poe... Kipling... Mérimée... Faulkner... Flaubert... And here's an excellent little-known writer, Heinrich von Kleist. Have you heard of him?"

Annette nodded. He could not tell if she were telling the truth or not.

"I'm surprised they put him in here. A double check for Kleist. Who else?... Gorki...Jack London? He is more of a journalist. I remember enjoying his stories as a boy. I'm not sure how I'd feel about them now. I'll check London, too."

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He handed the book back to her. Suddenly she wanted to get rid of it as fast as she could. She looked wishfully at the bookcase; if she put it back she knew her father would be annoyed. But she didn't like to have it next to her. "I'll just keep this in my room," said Annette.

"Mhm." A silence fell, like a sip of red wine. Instead of going out Annette waited, hung on for something more.

"By the way," Werner said, "you might practice a little the Brahms for tonight."

"I practiced it, Daddy!"

"You did? I must not have heard it."

"I practiced when you were gone yesterday. I've been practicing it all week. Remember?"

"I don't remember..." He wanted to tell her to practice it this time in his hearing. But he controlled himself. The best performance would come if she felt relaxed. He might tend to be a perfectionist in music; there was no point forcing her to over-rehearse. Nevertheless, the worry showed on his jowled face. "Did you find it manageable or difficult?"

"A little difficult.—Daddy, do you think I could ever be a violinist?"

"That depends." Werner filled his pipe bowl slowly with tobacco.

"Depends on *what*?" Annette said exasperatedly.

"If you were to take it more seriously you might. Most professional violinists practice five or six hours a day."

"What I meant is, do you think I have the talent to become one—even if I practiced six hours a day?"

Werner thought it over. "Music is a very hard life."

Annette squinched up her nose.

"Well you asked me my opinion. If you want me to say just what you would like to hear—"

"I don't care what you say."

"Lucky for you. That makes you very independent."

"Pfffffft—!"

I'm always offending her, he thought. The younger one is brazen but you have to laugh. There's something jolly, healthy about Terry. This one gets her back up so easily.

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She's poisoned with my melancholy.

"I'm going out to the garden," Werner announced.

6

The sun had recently come out. A cloud had just passed over the land and was sweeping in dips toward the Potomac. Through a V of cleared foliage the hill could be seen with its alternations of light and shadow, each farm patiently waiting its turn.

Werner stationed his garden chair in front of the clearing, his back to the house, in order to get the most distant view. As a result of clever landscaping one could imagine their land stretched for miles over rolling plains, though actually this plot held no more than half an acre.

The tiger lilies had come out marvelously this year.

Ah!... Let them say what they want, let them do what they want. As long as they leave me this beautiful garden to look at, this warm sky, this *earth.*

A noise shook the grass behind him. He was afraid it might be a human but it was only Regina waddling up for affection. Werner dug his fingernails into the dog's shaggy mat. The animal sighed and Werner widened his massage, letting his fingertips soak up the heat, losing his train of thought, guided only by the whirlpool of muscles, indulging himself on flesh.

Werner hoped no one could see him. Then he began to wish that someone would take notice of his popularity with the dog, he who had always felt estranged from the natural.

"How much easier life is when there are all these living things around us—children, flowers, animals. How much lighter, how much heavier the burden! Look how grateful Regina is. I am such a success with her. She asks to be petted, I do, and she is happy. Terry asks to be picked up. I do, and she is happy. Incredible!"

Just then an extraordinary sweep of light and shade came over the garden. He rose automatically. In that gust of wind the twigs seemed to stand out against the trees with iron clarity. Accents of sunspots were strewn over the grounds like

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drops of rain after an electrical storm. Each blade of grass and each pine cone seemed to have shivered into its final outline. This must be how Adam saw, Werner thought.

He had known such bountiful moments in Nature before, when attentiveness came as easily as breathing and everything smelled very grand and he knew they didn't last longer than a half-hour... even so, even so, he thought stubbornly, this was all happening and it was marvelous, marvelous.

Marvelous, marvelous, he kept repeating, hoping to prolong it. Already he felt the blood was draining from the scene, the crispness was retreating. He listened to his heavy breathing, the sharp bird noises... If heaven were to speak to him now he would not miss the signal.

Maybe an angel passing overhead would be lured by his antennae.

No?

He thought of Rilke, and of the passage in *Duino Elegies* about going through life with the attitude of always lingering, forever taking leave. "So leben wir und nehmen immer Abschied."

Well, I've had my moment of happiness for the day.

His neighbor on the right side, Purdy, came out with a hose to give his garden a sprinkle. Mr. Purdy was a lanky businessman with white hair that rose in a dependable cowlick. He had shrewd common sense, Werner had decided once, but he liked to play dumber than he was.

Werner was in the mood to talk now and strolled over.

"Afternoon..." Mr. Purdy said. "I see you been puttering around in your garden here."

"Yes I was trying to, but I puttered so much that my engine went kaputt."

"Oh ho, yes."

"And now I must put away my putter," Werner nodded sagely.

A silence arose. Purdy seemed to have forgotten he was talking to anyone. His eyes took in the tricycle, bicycle and other hardware of his neighbor's yard.

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"You have a sun tan. You have been away for awhile?" Werner brought him back politely.

"Yes... on a business trip, to Austin, Texas. Had myself a ball. Say have you got a No. 5 spade I can borra?" Purdy asked in his Maryland drawl.

"A No. 5 spade, a spade," Werner tapped his forehead. "Hmm..." He was eager to oblige in some way. Rarely did any of his neighbors ask him for a favor and he took it as a sign of growing community acceptance. But he knew he had no such article, so his mind began to work the answer into a joke, possibly: No I haven't—to call a spade a spade. His clouded face had already given Purdy the answer.

"Thanks anyhow. I'll just drive down to Sears and pick up a new one."

"And what are you planning to plant?" Werner asked.

"Well there's a good question!" Purdy said with a hint of fun in his eye. "It depends on if we get the cabbage in soon so's we can utilize the patch by the side of the house, because Mrs. Purdy wants tomaters and I'm thinking we can diversify over by that fence. That is if there aren't so many rabbits as we had last year. But even if they're back I got a little surprise for them. You see that metal thingamajob over there?" Purdy went into an explanation of catching rabbits and the varieties of fertilizers that passed over Werner's head.

Werner gave himself over to staring shamelessly at his neighbor's Adam's apple. It had a loose flap of gooseflesh that slid up and down every time Purdy took a swallow. This man is priceless, thought Werner.

Finally Purdy's mouth went dry and he turned to hook up his rubber snake.

Werner hurried inside to tell his wife. "I have just been talking with Mr. Purdy—" he announced. Marlene was not immediately visible. Soon she came up the basement stairs carrying the wash basket. She brushed past him and into the kitchen.

Werner pursued her with his juicy anecdote. "I have had a most interesting tête-à-tête with our neighbor Purdy," he said suspensefully.

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"Yes? What did he have to say?"

"He was giving me a course of instruction on the uses of fertilizer. You can't believe how he went on. I know he is a salesman for a living but I never knew what he sold. Perhaps it's fertilizer."

"I should think so, with that smelly garden.—Lunch is now. Can you call the girls?"

"Terry. Annette!"

"What?" Annette stuck her head in mistrustfully.

"Your mother informs me that we are to eat lunch. Please kindly join us ladies..."

7

The children took chairs on one side of the maple table, which was large even without the center leaf, and barren except for four straw Mexican place mats. The girls were banging their forks on the place mats. Werner sat at the head of the table, absently watching them.

"You weren't supposed to tell Mommy we were saving for her present," Annette said.

"Oh yeah? Well you're the one who made me tell her!"

Marlene called from the kitchen: "Who will give me a hand to bring in the food?"

Annette looked at Terry. "Your turn."

"What??"

"You remember I had to dry dishes this morning."

"Okay, okay," Terry said and went inside.

Werner tapped the table to get his daughter's attention. She would appreciate the story about Purdy.

"Do you know Purdy our next door neighbor? Well he is starting to speak freely with me. For the first time we had a decent chat..."

"Thank you for being so polite!" cried Marlene as she struggled in with a large dish. Werner cleared his throat and helped her set it down. "Help yourself. There is some leftover macaroni salad also if anybody wants it. You can start on the jam and peanut butter and cheese."

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"Peepee butter," Terry said brightly.

"Pass down the cheese, please?"

"I don't want no peepee peanut butter mommy."

"That's enough. What kind of nonsense is that to talk at the table."

"Me no talkee nonsense," Terry said solemnly like a movie Indian.

Her mother laughed in spite of herself. "Who would like some milk?"

"Mommy, you should hear the way Susan Edmonds does it. She was teaching us at Brownies. 'I no is crazy. No I me.'"

"I'm not surprised she teaches you it. Such trash, that Brownies!" said Marlene Hartmann, leaping up to fetch something.

"Why do you call it trash, Mother?" Annette challenged her.

"It's rubbish, that's why. Trashy is common, low, worthless. Darling, would you like some wine?"

Hartmann shook his head. He had fallen into a bad mood. It was childish he realized, just because they interrupted his story!

"What's the matter?" asked Marlene.

"Sit down. I've been waiting for you to eat with us."

"Oh I? I eat when everyone is finished!" Nevertheless she sat down. "Who would like some more bread?"

"I would!" said Annette.

"Of course you would! Here, help yourself, but go easy on the slices. You watch your figure, girl. You don't want to get like Mommy do you? Gosh I am on a diet and I can't eat a thing! Now who would like the rest of the macaroni salad?"

"No thanks," said Terry.

"It's a pity then," said Marlene, "I'll have to give it to Regina. And she gets so fat she won't be able to waddle from the kitchen to the bathroom. Poor Regina, under the table—maybe she would like to join us for a meal! What do you say, Regina? Look how she always goes to Daddy. Clever dog, she knows who is the master. Mhm, what a gorgeous day outside. It's a shame we didn't eat on the patio. So much more

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fun to take meals in Nature! Who wants to be stuck inside on a day like this. We should go for an excursion. I have an idea, kids, listen. Please stop that for one second. Who would like to take a ride this afternoon."

"I would," said Annette.

"Me two. Me three," said Terry. "Me four."

"Wonderful! Maybe you can ask Daddy if he takes you."

"Yes if you like," Werner said. "I could take them to the museum of the woods."

"Mu-seum!" Terry wiggled up her nose. "Every time we go anywhere it's the museum."

"You could go to the old canal," said Marlene.

"*That's* no fun, the canal."

"No we can have a nice time," Annette poked her sister. "Come on Terry, say the canal."

Terry refused to budge.

"Is there anything for dessert?" asked Hartmann.

"There's fruit and cheese."

"We had cheese for lunch. That's not dessert," exclaimed Annette.

"You don't have to take it if you don't want it! In Europe it's considered a very elegant dessert."

Annette shrugged off this statement. "So what happened with Purdy?" she turned to her father.

"Yes, you never told us that story," Marlene said.

"He is going to lay traps in the backyard to kill the rabbits."

"Barbarian!" exclaimed Marlene.

"Why is he a barbarian?" Annette asked.

"Will you let me continue?... He thinks the rabbits are coming from a farm coop on Muehlenhill Drive. And that the owner opens the cages at night because he doesn't like the small homeowners. Purdy suggests that everyone in our row buy rabbit traps and leave them at the fence."

"I wouldn't dream of it!" Marlene said. "Think if Regina gets hurt."

"Yet I enjoyed talking to him. You get an idea what America must have been like. He is unique, Purdy, a vanishing type of *Americana*."

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"What do they do with the rabbits when they kill them?" asked Terry.

"They cook them in a stew. Hasenpfeffer. Very tasty."

"Yuck! I wouldn't eat that if you paid me *ten dollars.*"

"You might change your mind someday," said Werner, taking a peach from the fruit basket.

The discussion seemed to have reached its end, when Terry muttered: "He'd kill a rabbit just for some old lettuce!"

"Lettuce means cash, no?" Marlene remarked. "In this country they worship cash, it's only natural they kill for their God."

"I don't think Germany's any better," Annette injected.

"No, Germany is worse! There's no comparison. Germans are very greedy, certainly. But at least in Germany they don't destroy the natural beauty for a few extra dollars."

"That's ridiculous," said Annette scornfully.

"You may not agree, that doesn't make me ridiculous!... Besides, when were you in Germany, miss?"

"I read an article that said Germany was one of the greatest polluters in the world. And that some of their big lakes are already dead."

"Where was this article?"

"In the *Christian Science Monitor.*"

"I never heard of such a magazine."

"Oh mother, you don't know what you're talking about! Right, the students are protesting because the German rivers are being polluted and the forests are getting cut down?" Annette asked her father.

"That is unfortunately correct," said Hartmann, who had been keeping out of it.

"I thought it was true for the cities," Marlene said doggedly, her voice catching, "but that they had a plan for protecting the countryside."

"What plan? You think everything is trashy over here and it's all perfect in Germany, Germany! You don't know."

"I know you don't talk to your parent that way. Go to your room," Marlene blurted out. She fled the table instead. They could hear her sniffling in the kitchen.

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Annette looked ashamed of herself. "I'm sorry. I'm really sorry." Then she went into her room to begin her exile.

Werner and Terry were left alone at the table. Neither particularly wanted to look at the other.

"Golly!" said Terry. "I didn't even expect that."

Her father gave his assent, as if to say: I know, you didn't have any part in it.

8

Marlene was loudly weeping in the kitchen. For about twenty seconds he considered not going into her. Then he picked himself up. She was not just crying but efficiently cutting a tomato at the same time, the blade pressing through the tomato and stopping just short of her thumb. Werner found her very lovable in this mode. He came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist. He could feel her thighs through the apron.

She turned around and her face was dripping with tears. She's like a mango, he thought, when you squeeze her the juice runs out. How amazing that mysterious wetness, like her vagina which is always sopping every time I go to touch it.

"Marlene, Marlene," he rocked her.

"Did you see what she said to me? Oh, you wouldn't let it upset you! To be talked to so cruelly by your own daughter."

"I understand. But listen, you shouldn't allow yourself to be dragged down to the level of a thirteen year old.—I agree, she shouldn't have said that to you. I'm only saying she's an immature child and if you consider that you won't get as hurt by her."

"She has such a cutting tongue, you don't know!" said Marlene, wiping her eyes with her apron string. "It's easy for you to ignore it. She's always polite with you. Mother is fair game though."

He sensed her crying spring was about to run down. He put his arms around her; but just this tenderness set her off again.

"What hurts, what hurts the most is that they learn it from

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you. You are always being so clever and I'm the idiot. Mother is a fool, that's what *you* think of me. You stick up for her. What do I know? I'm a common housewife. Is it my fault my education was stopped by the war, that I married so young and to someone who was smarter than me?

He had no easy words to answer her. I could agree, thought Werner; I could poke holes in her statement, I could find exceptions, historical reasons. *In the end I am powerless to take away certain kinds of inequalities.*

Werner stayed with her a long while near the sink. It was getting cloudier outside. Soon they would drive out to buy ice cream, and maybe take a walk along the canal, and get home just in time to start receiving company, and something else would happen, and something else, and they would forget what had made them cry two hours earlier. That was the real sorrow. One activity was always following the next, taking them further along a path that was never explained, further away from some point back there that never got cleared up. One's spirits lifted and collapsed a dozen times a day with no fidelity to up or down. From upstairs came the sound of a violin being practiced.

Marlene blew her nose. Then the family drove out to the Potomac Canal.

9

"Geary could not make it, eh?"

"No Geary had to pick up his wife's brother at the airport."

"So this young lady will be our violin master. *Enchanté de vous avoir dans notre ensemble*. You understand French? Geary should be careful," Klausner winked at Werner. "He may come back next week and find he has lost his seat."

"If you heard me play you wouldn't say that."

"We shall see tonight. Your father says you are the new Heifetz."

"She will do well. Come, have some food," said Werner. "Marlene has gone out and gotten *Schwartzbrod* especially for you. I think you have made a conquest."

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"At my age I have my doubts." Klausner followed his friend into the dining room. He was a great-shouldered, bullish man, with a plodding walk, a psychoanalyst. At the cello he was a pillar of strength.

"Mar-lay-na!" he pronounced it, kissing her hand. "You are looking so lovely tonight if I were ten years younger I would not let you stay with this rotten man."

"And your eyes are getting weaker!" Marlene laughed. The doorbell rang again.

"Stanley, I'll bet," said Hartmann.

Stanley and Joy Morrison came into the dining room. He was tall as a basketball player, with black-rimmed glasses and a slow grin. His shirt pulled tensely against his bony shoulders when he put his big hand forward to shake hands. He and his wife worked at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. They were in group therapy together and had recently joined a nudist colony. Stanley, at thirty-five, was the youngest member of the quartet, capable of beautiful playing, but insecure, and hence the weakest link.

"Your front door is open," he observed.

"We leave it open for wandering gypsy violists," said Werner. "Have a chair. Have some Camembert."

"Joy, what happiness it is to see you," Klausner exclaimed, "particularly for an old Freudian like me."

"Why do you keep saying that?" asked Joy.

"Because Freude means *joy* in German, get it?" said Stanley.

"White wine anyone?—to wash away the taste of Klausner's bad puns." Werner filled the glasses with great zest.

"Aren't you going to offer any to our violinist?" Morrison nudged him. "What are you, an adult chauvinist?"

"No, but I am cautious just the same.—Here Annette, have a little."

"Oh, more than that!" Annette exclaimed. Everyone laughed.

"Refills?" Werner asked after a silence of some moments.

"Any more for me and I'll make Brahms sound like—"

"Boogie Woogie!" Klausner finished Stanley's sentence.

"That would be nice for a change," said Marlene.

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"How's the research business, Werner?" asked Stanley.

"So-so. And you, are you doing anything for my welfare? What about my health and education? I keep expecting you to pull some strings with the President."

"No...It's only old Hans here who's saving any souls."

"Not so!" said Klausner. "Just last week I let two of my patients go crazy."

Everyone laughed, Klausner heartiest of all. Marlene Hartmann smiled to herself; she loved the sound of laughter in her house, and had a special affection for Klausner.

"Well, shall we start?" said Werner. They moved into the living room, where four wooden folding chairs had been set up facing the orange couch.

"I was looking over the Brahms score this morning and I noticed," said Stanley, "that Brahms has the habit of making the tempi difficult for amateurs—"

"Brahms has no longer any habits," Klausner interjected. "Except decomposition."

"Which is rather peculiar for a composer," added Werner.

"On that note..." Stanley said gamely, sitting down and taking his viola out of the case.

They began to tune up. It was the moment when each man had to go into himself, leaving the social comfort behind. Stanley frowned and listened to his tone; Klausner, bowing, stared into space; at the piano Werner's profile had turned into the outline of severe nobility.

"We will start off with the Mozart trio," he said calmly to Annette, "and then the Brahms. You can tune up now or later."

"I'd rather later."

"Fine. Would you like to be my page turner for the Mozart?"

"All right. That will give me something to do.—I'm so nervous!" she whispered to him.

"That goes away," he whispered back. "Remember, keep your tongue in."

"I will!" she said, and laughed ruefully.

"What's the order?" asked Stanley.

"I thought first the Mozart piano trio, to warm up, then

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Brahms third quartet, then solos if anyone wants, then if we have time, another trio, the Haydn we did before. How does that sound?"

Klausner nodded. It was assumed that Hartmann would make those decisions. Though not necessarily the best musician, he was the guiding spirit of the group, its backbone.

Werner gave the signal with his chin to begin. Stanley was there from the first note. Klausner liked to hold back, to let the other players set the scene, and move cautiously in and around their energy. Then when he felt rooted in the piece, he would charge like a buffalo and everyone would go flying to the end. That Klausner loves to steal the show, thought Marlene.

"Soon you should go to bed, you have school tomorrow," Marlene remarked to her youngest daughter.

"I want to see Annette play."

"Of course you'll see Annette play." Her mother was touched by this loyalty. They were learning to be friends, those two. Such flowing music! Lovely. Like mountain springs when the snow melts... Interesting how Stanley and Klausner always look down at their instruments, while Werner keeps nodding to them and giving quick glances in their direction. That funny giving-approval with his chin. He was not always so attentive to the people around him. And look at Annette—leaning like a swan over the piano to turn the pages. That girl has such a beautiful neck! Where did she get it from? Not Werner or herself, it must be Grandma Hartmann. What a pity she wears her hair wild and keeps it hidden. Tonight she looked very neat with the brown tortoiseshell barrette. *Barrettes* are such funny things. Father and daughter in a space of their own. How she bends down to turn the pages, practically putting her breasts in Werner's mouth! Does he notice it I wonder. Of course he notices it. The way she parades around him in her slip, sitting in front of him with her legs open and panties showing. I'm jealous of my daughter! Silly! Of course, she's younger and prettier than me. Werner is surrounded by women. Poor man, it must be a strain on him. Sometimes I think we give him too

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much love. He feels stifled. But I can't help myself—how can I hold back my feelings? When I see him I feel so grateful. Every day I can have him in the same house with me I want to say it's a miracle. Ridiculous! You'd think by now I would take him for granted. But he's so impressive-looking. You see how the other women are drawn to him. Joy as well. Ich! I love him so much more than he loves me, it's pathetic. If I were to hold back more but I can't. He's getting tired of me. Certainly, I can't stimulate him enough. I'm no intellectual. He talks to Annette before he talks to me. I am like a visitor in my own house. Gosh, my eyes are getting wet. This music makes me so sad. It's like that other one, who proposed to me on the lake. I didn't understand what he wanted! Crazy girl—just seventeen. I asked Mother what it was all about and she said I was much too young. He had such strange unhappy eyes: that's what sticks with me. And later on he went off and committed suicide. But certainly not because of me! I wonder what both men, so sensitive and educated, saw in me. Was it something they made up? Was it that they needed a hausfrau who was practical and down to earth. To balance their soaring? Maybe I did look "mysterious" at one time, the way my lip hung down in the old photographs. Now I don't think I'm specially attractive at forty. It's Werner who draws people to the house. All these brilliant people, our social circle, the group tonight—of course they made small talk with me at table but they don't care anything about me. If Werner were to die before me they would see me a few times out of courtesy, and then I will be thrown back on myself. Gosh, how lonely that will be! And why do I keep thinking he will die before me? Now I must hold back the tears. It's over. Everyone will be looking round. How did the piece go so fast? Good music is such a treat for me, but I always think about something else! Next time I must really listen to every note.

"Anyone for some coffee?" she jumped up. "You must be thirsty, you musicians. That was marvelous!"

"Bravo," Joy Morrison called out. She followed Marlene into the kitchen. "Can I help you with the dishes?"

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"No, everything's taken care of."

Joy lingered all the same. Then she moved to help Marlene lift the tray—which was quite light to begin with. Not because I can't manage, thought Marlene, but for her own conscience. I should really invent some task for her to do. If I were nice. But I'm not feeling so nice toward her.

As she passed the kitchen doorway Joy stopped her to confide. "I feel foolish sitting there and clapping at the end, don't you?"

"Foolish, why?"

"Because it's making believe that we're the audience—an audience all of three—when really they're playing for each other. We're just eavesdroppers. I don't know, it makes me mad."

"That's interesting. I'm not sure I see what you mean," said Marlene.

"Well skip it," Joy murmured. "Probably making a mountain out of a molehill."

Coffee mugs were passed around and again the players tuned their instruments. This time Annette joined them. Annette went over the score: it was the C Minor piano quartet. The first movement was allegro non troppo, the second a scherzo, the third andante—which was good because by that time she would need a rest—and the fourth allegro again. How convenient that the slow part came in the middle! She wished the whole thing was andante. Stanley gave her a wink, as if to say: Just stick with me!

"I'm already," she said.

Her father nodded and hit the first note with such incredible firmness his finger almost went through the keyboard. The beginning was fairly somber: she wasn't going to try any fancy phrasing, if she kept up that was enough. Daddy was giving her approving nods, so far, so good. She looked across for one second at her father's hands: they were like knotted roots growing from a tree. She knew their feel when he took hold of her hand on a walk, their special temperature. How I hate him sometimes, but I always love his hands. Elbow's up! She hadn't made one mistake yet. I'm going to

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have to make a mistake soon. This next part is where I always make the mistake. I feel like I'm on the merry-go-round and can't get off. I have to make a mistake soon. It's coming up, it's coming up, one bar away, train going around the curve. I got it! Now let's see if I make this next one. This part is too hard for me. They can't expect me to do this, this is getting too fast for me. This is a nightmare... Why am I putting myself through this? Oh, first mistake! (Hartmann winced at the sour note but nobody else seemed bothered.)

He doesn't like it when I mess up. But I like it. I'm going to to mess up some more before this is over. I'm only thirteen years old! Funny that time we played the duet and I goofed on the last note. Boy, was he upset. Why do I always do that? I know why.

Terry waved at her and she lowered her eyes. Her fingers were swelling from the tension of the bow. Her forehead was hot; her nostrils itched. She tried to scratch her nose and bring the bow back in time but lost the rhythm. Don't think about that mistake, just let it go by. If you get stuck you'll never be able to find your place again. But that mistake was so interesting! It was like watching a glass roll off the table and knowing and knowing and not being able to stop it. Those are my favorite kinds of mistakes.

Why was Stanley smiling at her so weirdly? Through those goggly glasses. He was a friendly one.

Annette rolled her eyes in mock exhaustion: Difficult, whew! Stanley returned the expression: Impossible! Klausner noticed their clowning and made a wry jab at them with the bow. You two are having fun, his bushy eyebrows said: What about me? Klausner played the next phrase in such a way that Annette imagined it was for her benefit. She could not say what made it stand out, but it was somehow droll, as if placed in quotes. She looked sideways at Klausner and tried to play the same way in response. He returned with an extraordinarily robust sawing motion. Annette smiled to herself, then tittered.

Werner looked sternly at her. He had the feeling he was whipping them along like a steward. He would do justice by

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the owner, Brahms. Maybe there was no justice in the world but they would have justice in music. For instance this passage: he would show them how it was done. Tenderly, but with no relinquishing of strength. Each note asked of him to be played with sympathy, to be stroked on the face, while the other notes were crying in the corner. How hurtful art was to all the things it left out. No you can't come in, only C minor, he gets work today! That was what Nietzsche meant by: "Genius always has a streak of cruelty." Even Fra Angelico was cruel to the vulgar subjects he refused to paint. Let's see what Stanley will do with this solo. Not bad... Ow, little crude. There is that crudeness in his character. He takes pains to disguise it. Annette is playing astonishingly. Maybe she took to heart what I said before about her laziness. She is being forced to play beyond her capacity by the stronger players. Here everything is laid out and we have only to follow. Time knows how to behave for once. We do God's bidding. Music is God's inexorable thought.

What are these flowers on the piano? I don't want flowers. I am only interested in one thing, music! Like four horsemen we are plunging off the cliff.

At the end of the cadenza Terry pulled her mother's face down to her and whispered: "Mom, Daddy looks really mad."

"Not mad at all, dear. He's concentrating hard. It only looks like frowning."

"Oh."

They were in the Andante. Werner felt a globe of anger in his stomach. He watched it grow vertically into a glass rod across his lower chest. Then the glass cut deeper into him. It was like a deep gash, a valley between two sharp ridges. He knew the gash had always been there, covered up, the only companion in his loneliness. Now it was coming out, like blood under white scar tissue. It was very satisfying to feel it. But also so painful that it swelled him like a sausage that soon must burst.

The others, as if sensing his anger, moderated their playing. They surrounded him sorrowfully, like three graces. They were picking him up and rocking him. He did not like their

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protectiveness. He was grateful when the adagio began and he could again be an avenging angel. It was hard to imagine a music as anguished, as sickly as this piece. They had reached a pitch that was as keen as a dentist's drill piercing an open nerve. How much longer was this agony going to build? Was this what he was supposed to give himself up to, this yearning and infinite ache?

Suddenly the melody lifted right up and they were on a plateau overlooking broad plains... a field of waving wheat... it seemed an unimaginable solace was offered shortly ahead. Don't let this stop, don't let anything spoil the harmony that is meant to be. Just once let my soul overflow its banks. My heart is flooded with good strong feelings. It's going to be all right, my life will be redeemed... let no one dare to spoil it. If only they can let me have it this once. Oh coolness, sorrow, earth everything together...

Annette bit her lips. I just know I'm going to make a mistake, I can't help myself, she whimpered inside. I know I'm going to miss it. They came to the finale, her elbow dragged and she played the penultimate note. It screeched horribly.

"WRONG NOTE! WRONG NOTE!" he screamed.

She let the violin drop from her hands. Hartmann saw blood and slapped her face.

A force had carried him out of himself. Something magnetic, something loving, and she must have sensed this love because even as the others tried to separate them she wept in his arms.

"Oh, yes," he said, wiping the tears away. How easily tenderness came now. Then Marlene moved in to protect her, and Stanley and Joy Morrison. They're convincing her that she should be frightened of me, he thought bitterly.

Klausner took his friend Hartmann aside, into the hallway, away from the other's hearing.

"Werner," Klausner shook his head in private. "You just don't do things like that!"

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Skol Nidre

Maurice Roche

While expecting my gash, declaring
that this C/f urious d/M istress
was after me, and having to face the question (to her
face/in my mind) of blowing
my skull
—*this translucent*
hollow object, this crystal
that reflects the uncertain
future moment pre-echo memory

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of fugitive reality which,
fading as it merges, becoming
plainly—

of claiming

of making an

example. Arranging
discreetly—perhaps
unconsciously, for
a disappearance

of holding up as an

example what's
absent doesn't matter,
doesn't count

Left with the sense of a forgotten sight,
vainly racking one's wits to recover it

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—in no way ignorant of
the uselessness of so much effort,
doubtless only getting back
the bl ank ues when in(s)ane—
non-presence—a definitive lathiphrosynia (:)
giving up BESIDE *ONE'S SELF.*
Withdrawal
to merge with this perfect out.

in the end unconcerned, weary—indifferent—
skeptical of everything… One exception,
one belief kept fresh
: get stewed

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MiL *a*dy, (pink?
Ladie *M*acbed
up t *o* her
Beat *r*icks?
Cle *o*patra
sheer *S*ade?)
ska *a*l!

/etceterambling on/

Still the same coarsh song exhellin' her breath (embittered hell-firer: a sigh and auntie

(1)

with a flair for gold, a-flutter for garlic, tides, and for bitten fruit (man-dreck))

1. Scenes of magic times
Schemes of hatching crimes
Queens of tragic lines (masked as lovely creatures)

sentir odor di temina
..... of famine

(str$^{i}_{a}$pped$^{?}_{!}$)

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That tramp—her "la callous"
voice—starting up a Bacchic bar
song concerning a mixed butt of
broads:

(s)TONE('s th)ROW of fortunes told

(1)

1. Dido on sale Salome
second-hand Andromeda
ten percent off Ophelia
— big slash
Scheherezade
old-tale-spinner
for forgotten
sleeper

thanks to this
cocktail of
aphrodisiac spunk
—Bols' best—
when in orbit give
each queen of fear
the lewd glance
allotted

Mad-Helen of our lo$^{gos}_{dgings}$

by consent or force,
your great chains as
loving garlands of
thirds; oh your fanny's
idiot brawn my foolish
hit-or-Misstery of
yore...
Beloved Mummy, only
to tickle your nipples—
(...your Santa raisins),
just your teenie tits...

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encourage a belief in your good
MOTIVES while sticking to your
obsessive
THEME; putting forward your
talent for calling the
TUNE (before getting to the
heart of the
SUBJECT, by countering!)
Accompany her a long way, in
spite of her lamentable
AIR of grandeur, so mysteriously
mis-
FIGURED (she so
BASE—obstinately so.) Keep
the "even
TENOR". Close the circle:

The end being my beginning

ness, then, giving
(up your) head, in
her divine silken
marquee loaf off the
slice (each cu(n)t
damned to be
he-bedded...) (;) A
fraud nightly consumed
(even achèd to come
and go)
Vary queen, mother,
still foolish—it

's true
there's made use o'
the wide-open snake pit

gasping (gaping)
can this be how little
was done her ( )
all veer on to the
reverse of the

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Anything but not everything. In rebus.

Die Linien des Lebens sind verschieden
Wie Wege sind.

"The woman [illegible] are sitting side by side, [illegible] backs to the entrance. In the large mirror facing us at the far end of the room we see the picture we form in this setting: the low round vessel, bent [illegible] it, not too close, our [illegible] heads, [illegible] and left, a shoulder juts out sharply. At the center of the far [illegible] between two glasses, stands a [illegible] beer: the house poke."

We feel like [illegible] mold of some ghostly calligram, our image reduced to the dimensions of a skull (with its inside ill).

DIIS MANIBVS.

Mors uitæ contraria, & uelocissima, quæ cuncta celcat, suppeditat, rapit, consumit, dissoluit, nullisub duos matrimonio se feriùs & ardentior amantes, hic extinctos coniunxit.

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Dragging
its sentences (any of them able to mean anything),
the eye slides on bringing signs and words to terms
at the bottom of a page
then, spilling
onto the sheet, moves over (one taboo less) the folds
(wrinkles of the brain) rumples lines of the bed
(;) terminal moving inscription : what's read

Translated from the French by Harry Mathews

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From the Country of Regrets

Erica Jong

Those who live by the word will die listening.
—Delmore Schwartz

It is a country where you can touch nothing: the food, the toilets, the people. The flies are everywhere. You come with your pockets stuffed with money, but there's nothing you can buy for fear of contamination, and nothing you can let touch you.

★

You enter a hotel with a central court. White plaster nymphs and cherubs in the fountain. Blue and yellow walls with white icing. Palms, ferns, growing out of white plaster planters. Servants sliding around noiselessly as if on invisible ball bearings. Fans turning overhead. The constant continuo of the fountain in the central court. But the statues are sugar. Gradually, the water erodes them and they crumble and fall into the fountain. The fountain crumbles and falls into itself. The whole court dissolves. Next, it begins to dissolve the hotel and the guests, who are also made of sugar. The hawks circle and circle overhead. But they are not interested in melted sugar.

★

(Directions to the Ruins)

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Where is the gate?

It is a mouth with a tongue
It is the curled tongue
of the rain god

Where is the door?

Under the eyes
Behind the teeth
kissed with moss

Where is the roof?

Over the breasts
Under the sky
ruined

Where is the floor?

Fragments
A mosaic of a dolphin
The lost poems of the dolphin minstrels

Where are the birds?

Under the eaves
Under the stones
gone

Where is the altar?

Under the throat
Pitted with rain
slick with blood

Where is the tower?

Between your legs
Above the hill
falling

Where is the well?

Filled with the bones of girls
with gold with blood
dry

Where is the tomb?

Follow the signs
Across the river
above you

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The taxis in this country are ancient American cars. They start with a death rattle in the ignition. They puff along producing a great deal of noise and very little motion. Every thrust forward seems an immense effort. On hills, the drivers and passengers have to get out and push. These cabs are usually painted bright red or green. The paint-jobs are amateurish and seem hastily done to conceal the American paint underneath. Even the windshields are painted red or green. Only little slits remain for the drivers to look out. The interiors are covered everywhere possible with transparent red plastic. It hangs down in strips like old wallpaper. Glued to the plastic are amulets of all kinds: blue beads against the evil eye, Infants of Prague, fat bellied Buddhas, arabic mottoes, St. Christopher medals, homages to Quetzalcoatl, tiny reproductions of copulating Hindu gods, copies of the Lascaux animals, tiny plastic unicorns, griffins, sea dragons.

★

It is difficult to communicate with the people because every family speaks a different language, handed down through the generations and kept within the family like an heirloom. There are a few common words which the whole populace shares: words for MOTHER, MOUTH, FOOD, WAR: the verbs for MAKE, STEAL, BEAT, KILL... But even these words have personal family equivalents which people use in their own homes. A complete common language is not necessary because incest is the rule in this country, and children mate with their own parents and never leave home. Their children, in turn, mate with them, and sometimes even with the grandparents when the grandparents are young enough. There are great numbers of deformed people and hemophiliacs as a result, and citizens with no birth defects are regarded with suspicion, as if they had some contagious disease.

★

(Chant at the Body's Birth-gate or the Nunnery-door)

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Into the mouth
lost lost forever
& the teeth
that prison
Into the eyes
pull down the shades
the brain still ticks
Into the nose
hold it
it stinks
Into the ears
oh horny for music
Into the breasts
dry as powdered bone
Into the navel
flat
no tunnel
Into the anus
cities will die there
Into the cunt
the cave of the mother
let me lie down there
rest
let me rest

★

Tourists arrive in the country expecting a pleasant vacation, but within a few days, they are ready to leave. Generally, they fall prey to terrible diarrhea, or vomiting, or both. They try, despite their illness, to visit the great landmarks: The Temple of the Club-footed Virgin, The Cathedral of the Ebony Hermaphrodite, The Triumphal Arch built by King Akiliomoatli, who was born without arms or legs and invented a kind of primitive wheelchair called "doabo" which many citizens still use. But sightseeing is soon made impossible by the constant bouts of diarrhea and the fact that public toilets are either very scarce or contaminated. A few enterprising citizens have made themselves rich by building toilet

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booths near the main public attractions and charging exorbitant rates to desperate victims. The people who have gotten rich this way are both admired for their shrewdness and looked upon with contempt by the rest of the populace—rather the way Jews are looked upon by gentiles in our culture. Often they become quite influential, but they are never allowed full equality in government and civic positions, and from time to time they are purged in pogroms (called, oddly enough, "Regrets"—though it has no connection whatsoever with the English word, and has, in fact, a wholly different etymology). After these pogroms, the toilet booths are confiscated by the State and given to other citizens. These citizens then become part of the hated caste and in a few generations their descendants are purged, and so it goes. Tourists from our own country consider this horrifying and barbaric.

*

Invariably, tourists decide to leave after less than a week. They try to make plane reservations, but find the hotel staffs sullen and uninterested. The concierges shrug their shoulders and pretend not to understand when the tourists insist they want to leave. They go to the airline offices but find them always closed. They try to call, but none of the telephones work. Finally, in desperation, they pack and go to the airport.

*

The airport (which one scarcely noticed on arrival) proves to be one smallish room with peeling yellow walls, old American pop music (a woman singing "Yes, We Have No Bananas," and a man singing "Teenie Weenie Bikini" seem to be the only two records), fans turning overhead, and thousand upon thousands of mosquitoes. The wind riffles a five-year-old calendar with pictures of half-naked girls sitting on orange tractors.

*

A weathered sign labeled *INFORMATION INFORMACION INFORMAZIONE* hangs over what appears to

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be a counter. On closer inspection, one finds it is a bar, and those glittering objects which promised so much information are really liquor bottles.

*

An old woman walks by carrying a pillow in a soiled pillowcase. Except for her, everyone is in straw hats and sunglasses and leis and everyone is overburdened with piñatas, cameras, bottles of watered-down Scotch, straw baskets, reproductions of ancient amphorae, straw flowers, skin-diving gear, guidebooks, and pornographic post cards showing leathery-skinned peasant women fornicating with bored-looking donkeys before the ruins. Because of the mosquitoes, everyone is scratching ankles, knees, wrists. There is always a high whine in the air around one's ears.

*

(The Poem About Ruins)

It is your life which writes
the poem about ruins
:
It rises purple
as a plumed serpent
on a jungled coast
Its eyes are green
:
the veined wings
of green insects
It worships sun
:
We are sitting our adolescence out
here on the damp floor of a tomb

We lie praying our hands like buried kings
Moss kisses our genitals & lips
The poem about ruins
is inside us
trembling

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:

It turns our cheeks
slate blue

No one,
it tells us,
can write it

Blank sun

I rest on the crumbled wall
of Caracalla's Baths

Something has dried the water up!

A butterfly lights on one shoulder wing

A Roman boy
would like to scrub my back

but my head is parched

:

The poem about ruins

We stumble through the labyrinth in Crete

Here Theseus fell
& Ariadne spread her legs
Here jars of honey stood
here jars of oil
a small way off
there stood the jars of bones
Weeds sprouted from the furrows in my brow
Rain pitted all the limestone of my cheeks
The paint washed off as off the Parthenon
My navel filled with earth
We are sifting through the stones
Ephesus, perhaps, or Ostia

Somewhere near some sea

There is a statue of my mother here
My father is the snake twined round her waist

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Look down!

We are climbing the Magician's Temple in Uxmal
You cannot count the steps up to the sun

We cling because we want to fall
& the poem about ruins
will be lost

*

Suddenly, everyone is herded into line for Customs and interrogated severely. A number of people are made to pay the last of their money as duty on articles they brought with them. They argue with the officials, but they cannot prove ownership, and, in desperation, they pay. When they return to their seats, some girls find that their pornographic post cards have been stolen. They want to complain to the authorities, but cannot remember any of the words for "donkey."

*

Finally, the plane is heard landing. The passengers all run out to see it taxi up to the gate. It is a sorry specimen: an old propeller plane with only three working engines and no familiar markings. It bears a painted Dodo on its flank and an Eohippus on its somewhat dented tail. Several of the women become hysterical and refuse to board. Children begin to cry. "Teenie Weenie Bikini" is still playing.

*

The crew walks out smartly. The captain appears to be wearing a black cowboy suit from a 1940's Western and a black mask, silver spurs and six-shooters. The stewardesses are dressed like dance hall girls of the Old West. They go over to the *INFORMATION* bar and order double bourbons which they proceed to bolt down. All the passengers watch them as they parade back across the room and out to the plane.

*

There is much reluctance and shuffling around, but everyone

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finally boards. The old woman with the pillow is seen boarding last. The mechanics do a vaudeville imitation of checking the engines, but the fact that they are really not doing anything is clear. One propeller is still not working properly. It turns sluggishly. The take-off is as slow as running in the dream. The plane seems to hover for a long time with its tail grazing the runway, and the tire treads screech at the moment of take-off. Then, miraculously, the plane is aloft and hovering over the ocean. The seat-belt sign is still on. The pilot's voice is heard over the P. A. system: "Due to a mechanical failure, we will crash shortly." The passengers sit riveted to their seats. Some laugh raucously. Others scream for the stewardesses. Others order drinks.

*

(Invisible, With Stalled Engines)

Perhaps we are not sinking
but God is going higher

He is finally invisible

Clouds pass above us
like milk in water

The sky is water

The plane we fly in
is a giant fish
which seems to stand still

But we believe in motion
We believe in the idea of motion

Forward, we say, is where
we are going

Perhaps God is going higher

We are not sinking
We do not believe we are sinking

*

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Some young people are heard begging the stewardesses for philosophical explanations. What have they done wrong? Why does evil have to exist? Why does death? Who willed it all? Doesn't the captain have any power over it?

*

The stewardesses bat their false eyelashes and smile their plastic smiles and ask: "Milk or juice, sir? Cocktail, sir?" Some passengers are attempting to break into the flight deck to demand an explanation from the Captain, but the door is locked. Other passengers sit paralyzed, listening for messages in the sound of the engines. They believe their hearts and the engines correspond.

*

And there in the corner, writing about everyone, trying to separate herself out of the scene, or be above it, or control it, or pretend she dreamed it—am I. I am the one with the open notebook, the one who lost her pornographic post cards, the one with thousands of mosquito bites behind each knee. Nothing bad can happen to me. I am only collecting material. I am making notes, on hell, on heaven.

*

It seems as though we have been waiting hours for the crash, but this may be an illusion. The stewardesses have not served drinks yet. Perhaps they do not intend to because of the mechanical trouble. One cannot tell. Also, one cannot hear the engines for the singing. Strapped in our seats, suspended between the ill-fitting fragments of our lives, we are singing. There is no place to get to. The sun is setting below the horizons of our eyes and all our windows seem to be on fire.

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Lewis MacAdams

Two Poems

cliché Panama

sadness passes
and madness passes
away and the train
left at dawn. Paul Blackburn
is gone.

*

To Parra

Nicanor!
Far out! You are really not a bad poet!
We should travel down to Idaho together!
How about it!

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Robert Creeley

Days and Days

HERE AGAIN

After we
were all
a bed,
a door, two
windows
and a chair.

HYPHENS

There is always
someplace.

ONE

Three to the one
makes two.

FUNNY

Raining here
in little pieces
of rain.
Wet, brother,

behind the ears
I love your hands.
And you too,
rain.

You insist on rain
because you are
no less than water,
no more than wet.

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THOUGHTS

Am I dying?
I am beautiful.
Either way.

NEW YORK

I've just been in New York.
What a place

Terrific.
You bet.

OUT

Let me walk to you
backwards
down a long street.
.

Here is the rain again.
I hear it
in my ear here.
.

What fun
to be done
if not already
done.
.

We were going
out.

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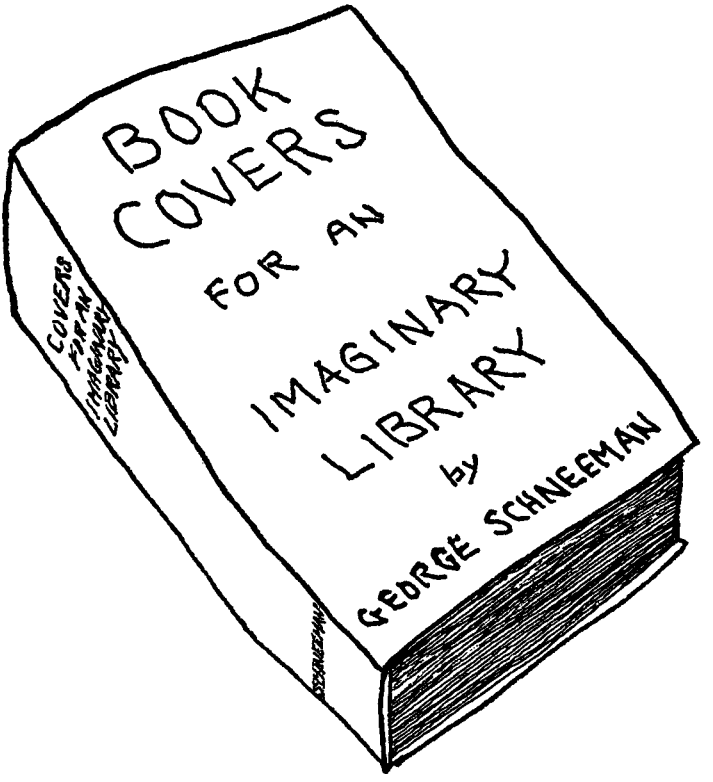

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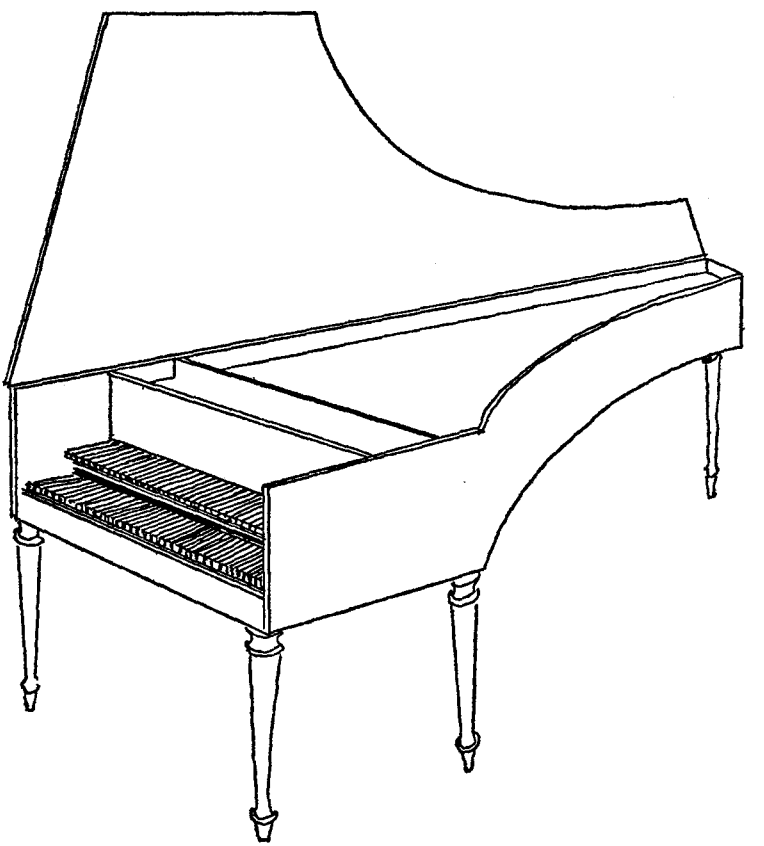
COUPERIN



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POKER FACES

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1974 CALENDAR

& DIARY

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A HISTORY OF MONARCHY

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time is an enemy
thick air
a pigeon writes
c
& out
frost
dog bones
chris shows me a note nat wrote
"jack is a fucker love nat"
mindlove morning
love—get rid of something
saying: it's done
the dog chews bones
love
leaps in instantly
wave or particle
light fucks frost
smoke
each thing, a thing
how about the light
invisible but works?
dawn
almost gone
the slant
bong a peak
bear peak there
all day long
lucky
frostlight lucky mind love
got ca-ca in yr pants?
uh-unh
that drive?
no/shoot/different/man
8:25 squint against the sun looking at the slight
wave of the southeast horizon
hiding Denver blue on blue
a little sparkle left
in the yard

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Curtis Faville

Plato

in his tree

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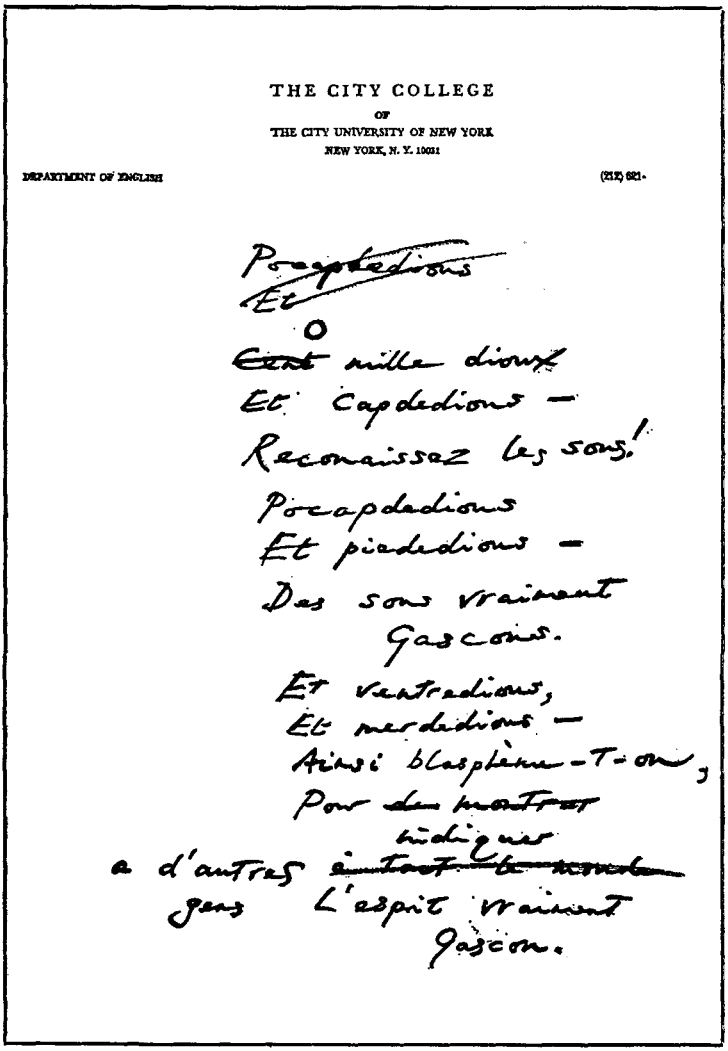

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NEW YORK, N. Y. 10031

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (212) 621-

Pocapdedious
Et
O
~~Cent~~ mille diouf
Et Capdedious —
Reconaissez les sons!
Pocapdedious
Et piededious —
Des sons vraiment
Gascons.
Et ventredious,
Et merdedious —
Ainsi blasphème-T-on,
Pour se montrer
ridicule
a d'autres ~~gens de bon sens~~
gens L'esprit vraiment
Gascon.

Anthony Burgess manuscript in Gascon dialect

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The Art of Fiction XLVIII

Anthony Burgess

John Anthony Burgess Wilson was born in Manchester, England, on February 25, 1917. Raised a Roman Catholic, he attended local parochial schools and graduated with honors in English Literature from Manchester University in 1940. He served in the Army Education Corps from 1940–46; for three years he was stationed on Gibraltar, where his first novel, A Vision of Battlements *(1965), is set.*

After the war Burgess held several teaching posts, including that of Colonial Education Officer in Malaya and Borneo from 1954–59.

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During this period he wrote his Malayan trilogy, The Long Day Wanes *(1956–59); when illness forced his repatriation in 1959, he became a professional writer. His other novels include* The Right to an Answer *(1960),* The Doctor is Sick *(1960),* The Worm and the Ring *(1961),* Devil of a State *(1961),* A Clockwork Orange *(1962),* The Wanting Seed *(1962),* Honey for the Bears *(1963),* Nothing Like the Sun *(1964),* The Eve of Saint Venus *(1964),* Tremor of Intent *(1966),* Enderby *(1968), and* MF *(1971).* One Hand Clapping *(1961) was published under the pen name Joseph Kell. Burgess has also written* Re: Joyce *(1965), a critical study, and* Shakespeare *(1970), a biography, besides editing* A Shorter Finnegans Wake *(1966).* The Novel Now, *a critical survey, appeared in 1967, followed by* Urgent Copy *(1968), a collection of literary essays and reviews.*

In his spare moments Burgess returns to composing, his first love; he takes music very seriously, has had a symphony performed, and wrote the incidental music for the production of his own new translation of Cyrano de Bergerac *(1971) at the Tyrone Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. The same company has recently performed Burgess' translation of* Oedipus the King *(1972). He now lives with his wife and son in Rome.*

Much of the interview was conducted through an exchange of letters from June 1971 until the summer of 1972. On December 2, 1972, a portion of the interview was taped at the Center for Twentieth Century Studies of the University of Wisconsin. Burgess' schedule during his two-day visit had been backbreaking; there was scarcely a break in the round of class visits, Joyce readings, and interviews. Tired as he appeared after that routine, Burgess showed no tendency to curb the flow of his responses; and his spoken portions, when spliced with the previous exchanges, seem as polished as a written draft.

Currently visiting the United States as Distinguished Professor at City College of New York, he has been able, while teaching full time and working in the theater, to complete two new books: Joysprick, *a study of Joyce's language, and* The Clockwork Condition, *an autobiographical essay.*

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INTERVIEWER

Are you at all bothered by the charges that you are too prolific or that your novels are too allusive?

BURGESS

It has been a sin to be prolific only since the Bloomsbury group—particularly Forster—made it a point of good manners to produce, as it were, costively. I've been annoyed less by sneers at my alleged over-production than by the imputation that to write much means to write badly. I've always written with great care and even some slowness. I've just put in rather more hours a day at the task than some writers seem able to. As for allusiveness—meaning, I suppose, literary allusiveness—that's surely in the tradition. Any book has behind it all the other books that have been written. The author's aware of them; the reader ought to be aware too.

INTERVIEWER

At what time of day do you usually work?

BURGESS

I don't think it matters much; I work in the morning, but I think the afternoon is a good time to work. Most people sleep in the afternoon. I've always found it a good time, especially if one doesn't have much lunch. It's a quiet time. It's a time when one's body is not at its sharpest, not at its most receptive—the body is quiescent, somnolent; but the brain can be quite sharp. I think also at the same time that the unconscious mind has a habit of asserting itself in the afternoon. The morning is the conscious time, but the afternoon is a time in which we should deal much more with the hinterland of the consciousness.

INTERVIEWER

That's very interesting. Thomas Mann, on the other hand, wrote religiously virtually every day from nine to one, as though he were punching a time clock.

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BURGESS

Yes. One can work from nine to one, I think it's ideal; but I find that the afternoon must be used. The afternoon has always been a good time for me. I think it began in Malaya when I was writing. I was working all morning. Most of us slept in the afternoon; it was very quiet. Even the servants were sleeping, even the dogs were asleep. One could work quietly away under the sun until dusk fell and one was ready for the events of the evening. I do most of my work in the afternoon.

INTERVIEWER

Do you imagine an ideal reader for your books?

BURGESS

The ideal reader of my novels is a lapsed Catholic and failed musician, short-sighted, color-blind, auditorily biased, who has read the books that I have read. He should also be about my age.

INTERVIEWER

A very special reader indeed. Are you writing, then, for a limited, highly educated audience?

BURGESS

Where would Shakespeare have got if he had thought only of a specialized audience? What he did was to attempt to appeal on all levels, with something for the most rarefied intellectuals (who had read Montaigne) and very much more for those who could appreciate only sex and blood. I like to devise a plot that can have a moderately wide appeal. But take Eliot's *The Waste Land*, very erudite, which, probably through its more popular elements and its basic rhetorical appeal, appealed to those who did not at first understand it but made themselves understand it: the poem, a terminus of Eliot's polymathic travels, became a starting point for other people's erudition. I think every author wants to *make* his audience. But it's in his own image and his primary audience is a mirror.

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INTERVIEWER

Do you care about what the critics think?

BURGESS

I get angry at the stupidity of critics who wilfully refuse to see what my books are really about. I'm aware of malevolence, especially in England. A bad review by a man I admire hurts terribly.

INTERVIEWER

Would you ever change the drift of a book—or any literary project—because of a critic's comments?

BURGESS

I don't think—with the exception of the excision of that whole final chapter of *A Clockwork Orange*—I've ever been asked to make any changes in what I've written. I do feel that the author has to know best about what he's writing—from the viewpoint of structure, intention and so on. The critic has the job of explaining deep-level elements which the author couldn't know about. As for saying where—technically, in matters of taste and so on—a writer is going wrong, the critic rarely says what the author doesn't know already.

INTERVIEWER

You've mentioned the possibility of working with Stanley Kubrick on a film version of Napoleon's life. Can you remain completely independent in devising the novel you're currently writing about Napoleon?

BURGESS

The Napoleon project, which began with Kubrick, has now got beyond Kubrick. I found myself interested in the subject in a way that didn't suggest a film adaptation and am now working on something Kubrick couldn't use. It's a pity about the money and so on, but otherwise I'm glad to feel free, nobody looking over my shoulder.

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INTERVIEWER

Has working as a professional reviewer either helped or hindered the writing of your novels?

BURGESS

It did no harm. It didn't stop me writing novels. It gave facility. It forced me into areas that I wouldn't have voluntarily entered. It paid the bills, which novels rarely do.

INTERVIEWER

Did it bring you involuntarily to any new subjects or books that have become important to you?

BURGESS

It's good for a writer to review books he is not supposed to know anything about or be interested in. Doing reviewing for magazines like *Country Life* (which smells more of horses than of calfskin bindings) means doing a fine heterogeneous batch which often does open up areas of some value in one's creative work. For instance, I had to review books on stable management, embroidery, car engines—very useful solid stuff, the very stuff of novels. Reviewing Lévi-Strauss' little lecture on anthropology (which nobody else wanted to review) was the beginning of the process which led me to write the novel *MF*.

INTERVIEWER

You've stressed the importance of punctuality to a good reviewer. Do you find that a creative writer need stick to a strict work schedule too?

BURGESS

The practice of being on time with commissioned work is an aspect of politeness. I don't like being late for appointments; I don't like craving indulgence from editors in the matter of missed deadlines. Good journalistic manners tend to lead to a kind of self-discipline in creative work. It's important that a novel be approached with some urgency. Spend

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too long on it, or have great gaps between writing sessions, and the unity of the work tends to be lost. This is one of the troubles with *Ulysses*. The ending is different from the beginning. Technique changes halfway through. Joyce spent too long on the book.

INTERVIEWER

Are you suggesting that Molly Bloom's soliloquy is an inappropriate ending because it's technically different from the opening three chapters devoted to Stephen Dedalus?

BURGESS

I don't mean the very end of *Ulysses*. I mean that from the Cyclops episode on, Joyce decides to lengthen his chapters to make the reading time correspond with the imagined time of enactment. In that sense the book is technically not so much a unity as people like to think. Compare the Aeolus episode with the Oxen of the Sun and you'll see what I mean.

INTERVIEWER

Considering the length of time that Proust spent on his novel and that Mann devoted to *Joseph and his Brothers*, is seven years really so long for a work as great as *Ulysses*? What, then, about the seventeen years Joyce frittered away on *Finnegans Wake?*

BURGESS

Time spent on a book is perhaps no concern of the reader's really (*Madame Bovary*, a comparatively short book, took longer to write, surely, than the *Joseph* sequence). The whole question is whether the writer can be the same person, with the same aims and approach to technique, over a long stretch of time. *Ulysses*, being innovative, had to go on being more and more innovative as it was written, and this makes it a sort of disunity. *Finnegans Wake*, though it took much longer, got its essential technique established pretty early.

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INTERVIEWER

Your new book, *Joysprick*, is coming out soon, I understand. How does it differ in emphasis from *Re*: *Joyce*?

BURGESS

It covers a little of the same ground but not very much. It's an attempt to examine the nature of Joyce's language, not from a strictly linguistic point of view, but from a point of view which may be said to be exactly halfway between literary criticism and linguistics; it doesn't use many technical terms. It makes a phonetic analysis of Joyce's language; there aren't many linguists who can do this nowadays. Phonetics is rather old hat. But it does examine the dialects of *Ulysses*, the importance of establishing a pronunciation in *Finnegans Wake*, an analysis of the way Joyce constructs a sentence. It is not a profound book; it is meant to be a beginner's guide to the language of Joyce, and the real work of probing into Joyce's linguistic method must be left to a more scholarly person than myself.

INTERVIEWER

You say that you are taking what you call an old-fashioned phonetic approach to Joyce's language; and yet in *MF* you make use of Lévi-Strauss' structuralism. Are you at all interested in considering Joyce from the point of view of structural linguistics?

BURGESS

I don't think that's my line; I think this has to be left to a scholar. I think somebody has to be in a university, has to be not engaged as I am in the production of books and teaching and lecturing and living a pretty varied "show-biz" life; this is a job for a cool scholar. I don't think I qualify to do it. I'm interested in what sounds Joyce is hearing when he is writing down the speech of Molly Bloom and Leopold Bloom and the minor characters. It's a matter of great literary import, I would suggest, because the final monologue of Molly Bloom inclines a particular way of speech which is not consonant

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with her declared background. Here in Joyce there is something very implausible about the fact that Molly Bloom is the daughter of a major, brought up in the Gibraltar garrison, coming to Dublin speaking and thinking like any low Dublin fishwife. This seems to be totally inconsistent, and the point has not even been made before. I know Gibraltar better than Joyce did and better than most Joyce scholars. I'm trying to examine this.

INTERVIEWER

If Molly's monologue is too elegant, isn't it one of Joyce's points to have the poetic emerge from the demotic?

BURGESS

It's not elegant enough. I mean the fact that she uses Irish locutions like "Pshaw." She would not use any such term, she would not.

INTERVIEWER

There's a geographical thing.

BURGESS

There's a pattern implied. There's a social thing. In a very small garrison town like Gibraltar with this man, Major Tweedy, whose previous wife is Spanish, his half-Spanish daughter would speak either Spanish as a first language (and not with the usual grammar) or English as a first language—but certainly both languages, in the first instance in an Andalusian way, and in the second instance in a totally class-conscious, pseudo-patrician way. She would not come back to Dublin and suddenly start speaking like a Dublin fishwife.

INTERVIEWER

So Molly's language is probably closer in terms of social background to that of Nora Barnacle.

BURGESS

It is indeed; this final image is an image of Nora Barnacle

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and not of Molly at all. And as we know from Nora's letters, Joyce must have studied the letters and learned from them how to set down this warm womanly pattern of speech. Nora wrote the letters totally without punctuation, and sometimes it is hard to distinguish between a chunk of one of Nora's letters and a chunk of Molly's final monologue.

INTERVIEWER

I'm looking forward to this book. Have you thought of writing a long expansive novel?

BURGESS

I have in mind two long novels—one on a theatrical family from the middle ages till today, the other on a great British composer. The projects are so big that I'm scared of starting on them.

INTERVIEWER

Could you begin with a few excerpts in the form of short stories?

BURGESS

I can't write short stories, not easily anyway, and I'd rather keep my novel dark until it's ready for the light. I made the mistake once of publishing a chapter of an emergent novel in the *Transatlantic Review* and the sight of the extract in cold print turned me against the project. This is my one unfinished novel.

INTERVIEWER

Do you still hope to write a novel about Theseus' encounter with the Minotaur, or has Rawcliffe's scenario in *Enderby* disposed of that project?

BURGESS

As for the Minotaur idea, I have thought of publishing a volume of all Enderby's poems, and they would include *The Pet Beast* (which has become, incidentally, the title of the

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Italian version of *Enderby—La Dolce Bestia*). I can see the sense of pretending that someone else has written your book for you, especially your book of poems. It frees you of responsibility—"Look, I know this is bad but I didn't write it—one of my characters wrote it." *Don Quixote*, *Lolita*, *Ada*—it's an old and still lively tradition. I don't get writing blocks, except from the stationer, but I do feel so sickened by what I write that I don't want to go on.

INTERVIEWER

Do you write the big scenes first, as Joyce Cary did?

BURGESS

I start at the beginning, go on to the end, then stop.

INTERVIEWER

Is each book charted completely in advance?

BURGESS

I chart a little first—list of names, rough synopsis of chapters and so on. But one daren't overplan; so many things are generated by the sheer act of writing.

INTERVIEWER

Do you write non-fiction any differently?

BURGESS

The process is the same.

INTERVIEWER

Is the finished product much influenced by the fact that you do the first draft on the typewriter?

BURGESS

I don't write drafts. I do Page One many, many times and move on to Page Two. I pile up sheet after sheet, each in its final state, and at length I have a novel that doesn't—in my view—need any revision.

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INTERVIEWER

Then you don't revise at all?

BURGESS

Revising, as I said, is done with each page, not with each chapter or the whole book. Re-writing a whole book would bore me.

INTERVIEWER

Why did you decide to continue *Inside Mr. Enderby*, the first half of *Enderby*, after several years?

BURGESS

I planned the work as the long book that came out in America, but—since I was approaching the end of the one year that the doctors had given me to live—I was not able to do more than the first half in 1959–60. Unwillingness of the publishers to publish *Inside Mr. Enderby*—as Part I was called in England—made me delay the writing of Part II. But I had it all in my mind right at the start.

INTERVIEWER

After the doctors had diagnosed a brain tumor following your collapse in a Brunei classroom, why did you choose to write during that "terminal year" rather than travel, say? Were you confined in semi-invalid status?

BURGESS

I was no semi-invalid. I was very fit and active (this made me doubt the truth of the diagnosis). But to travel the world one needs money and this I didn't have. It's only in fiction that "terminal year" men have something tucked away. The fact is that my wife and I needed to eat and so on, and the only job I could do (who would employ me?) was writing. I wrote much because I was paid little. I had no great desire to leave a literary name behind me.

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INTERVIEWER

Did your style change at all during that year, possibly as a result of your feeling under sentence?

BURGESS

I don't think so. I was old enough to have established some kind of narrative style; but the real business of working on style, of course, came later. The novels written in this so-called quasi-terminal year—pseudo-terminal year—were not written with, you know, excessive speed; it was just a matter of working hard every day, working very hard every day—and *all* day—including the evenings. A good deal of care went into the works, and what people look for in what seems an excessive amount of production is evidence of carelessness. There may be a little of that; but it's not because of the speed or apparent speed, but because of flaws in my own make-up. I don't think it is possible to say that a particular work is obviously written during the terminal year. I don't think there is any qualitative difference between the various novels; and certainly I was not aware of any influence on style, on way of writing, caused by this knowledge.

INTERVIEWER

Several of your novels contain poetry written by various characters. Have you thought of writing poetry again seriously?

BURGESS

I've seen produced my version of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. This is in rhyme, and it worked well, as I expected it to. But I don't plan volumes of verse—too naked, too personal. I plan further stage translations—*Peer Gynt*, Tchekhov's *Chaika*—and I'm working on a musical of *Ulysses*. I'm much more likely to return to music. I've been asked to write a clarinet concerto, and my music to *Cyrano* has gone down well enough.

INTERVIEWER

Do you ever use musical forms in designing your novels?

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BURGESS

Ah yes, one can learn a lot from musical forms. I'm planning a novel in the style of a classical symphony—minuet and all. The motivations will be purely formal, so that a development section in which sexual fantasies are enacted can follow a realistic exposition with neither explanation nor transitional device, returning to it (now as recapitulation) with a similar lack of psychological justification or formal trickery.

INTERVIEWER

Composers traffic heavily in transitions. Isn't this particular instance of literary composition by musical analogy an example of "formal trickery," best understood by the reader who is at least an amateur musician?

BURGESS

I think that music does teach practitioners in other arts useful formal devices, but the reader doesn't have to know their provenance. Here's an example. A composer modulates from one key to another by the use of the "punning" chord, the augmented sixth (punning because it is also a dominant seventh). You can change, in a novel, from one scene to another by using a phrase or statement common to both—this is quite common. If the phrase or statement means different things in the different contexts, so much the more musical.

INTERVIEWER

One notices that the form of *A Vision of Battlements* is meant to be similar to that of Ennis' passacaglia, but can any but the most tenuously analogous relation be established between literature and music generally?

BURGESS

I agree that the musico-literary analogies can be pretty tenuous, but in the widest possible formal sense—sonata form, opera and so on—we've hardly begun to explore the possibilities. The Napoleon novel I'm writing apes the *Eroica* for-

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mally—irritable, quick, swiftly transitional in the first movement (up to Napoleon's coronation); slow, very leisurely, with a binding beat suggesting a funeral march for the second. This isn't pure fancy: it's an attempt to unify a mass of historical material in the comparatively brief space of about 150,000 words. As for the reader having to know about music—it doesn't really matter much. In one novel I wrote, "The orchestra lunged into a loud chord of twelve notes, all of them different." Musicians hear the discord, non-musicians don't, but there's nothing there to baffle them and prevent them reading on. I don't understand baseball terms, but I can still enjoy Malamud's *The Natural*. I don't play bridge, but I find the bridge game in Fleming's *Moonraker* absorbing—it's the emotions conveyed that matter, not what the players are doing with their hands.

INTERVIEWER

What about film technique as an influence on your writing?

BURGESS

I've been much more influenced by the stage than by the film. I write in scenes too long for unbroken cinematic representation. But I like to run a scene through in my mind before writing it down, seeing everything happen, hearing some of the dialogue. I've written for both television and cinema, but not very successfully. Too literary, or something. I get called in by makers of historical films to revise the dialogue, which they then restore to its original form.

INTERVIEWER

What happened to the proposed film versions of *Enderby* and *Nothing Like the Sun*?

BURGESS

The filming of *Enderby* fell through because the producer dropped dead at the Cannes film festival. The Shakespeare project came almost when Warner Brothers was being sold,

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and all existing enterprises were scrapped when the new regime started. It may, however, yet be fulfilled. Film people are very conservative about dialogue: they honestly believe that the immediate grasp of lexical meaning is more important than the impact of rhythm and emotionally charged sound. It's regarded as cleverer to pretend that the people of the past would have spoken like us if they'd been lucky enough to know how to do so, delighted with the opportunity to view themselves and their times from our angle. *The Lion in Winter* is thought to be a triumphant solution of the mediaeval dialogue problem, but of course it's just cheap.

INTERVIEWER

Does your novel in progress pose any special linguistic problems that may create obstacles for Stanley Kubrick as well?

BURGESS

The Napoleon novel is difficult from the dialogue angle, but my instinct tells me to use rhythms and vocabulary not much different from our own. After all, Byron's *Don Juan* could almost have been written today. I imagine the soldiers speaking as today's soldiers speak.

They're speaking in French anyway. As for the Napoleon film, Kubrick must go his own way and he'll find it a difficult way.

INTERVIEWER

Do you expect to write any more historical novels?

BURGESS

I'm working on a novel intended to express the feel of England in Edward III's time, using Dos Passos' devices. I believe there's great scope in the historical novel, so long as it isn't by Mary Renault or Georgette Heyer. The fourteenth century of my novel will be mainly evoked in terms of smell and visceral feelings, and it will carry an undertone of general disgust rather than hey-nonny nostalgia.

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INTERVIEWER

Which of Dos Passos' techniques will you use?

BURGESS

The novel I have in mind, and for which I've done a ninety-page plan, is about the Black Prince. I thought it might be amusing blatantly to steal the Camera Eye and the Newsreel devices from Dos Passos just to see how they might work, especially with the Black Death and Crécy and the Spanish campaign. The effect might be of the fourteenth century going on in another galaxy where language and literature had somehow got themselves into the twentieth century. The technique might make the historical characters look remote and rather comic—which is what I want.

INTERVIEWER

Are Mary Renault's retellings of Greek myths as bad as all that?

BURGESS

Oh, they're not unsatisfactory, far from it. Rattling good reads if you like that sort of thing. They just don't excite me, that's all. It's undoubtedly my fault.

INTERVIEWER

Do you expect to write another novel of the future, like *A Clockwork Orange* or *The Wanting Seed*?

BURGESS

I don't plan a novel about the future, except for a mad novella in which England has become a mere showplace run by America.

INTERVIEWER

Is England going to become simply an over-sized tourist boutique—or the fifty-first state?

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BURGESS

I used to think that England might become just a place that liked to be visited—like that island in J. M. Barrie's *Mary Rose*—but now I see that so many of the things worth seeing —old things—are disappearing so that England can become a huge Los Angeles, all motorways, getting about more important than actually getting anywhere. England is now going into Europe, not—as I had once expected and even hoped—America, and I think it will now have Europe's faults without its virtues. The decimal coinage is a monstrosity, and soon there'll be liters of beer, as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and no cheap wine or caporal tobacco. Absorption, anyway, since England either has to absorb or be absorbed. Napoleon has won.

INTERVIEWER

You mentioned that *A Clockwork Orange* has a concluding chapter in the British edition that isn't available in the American ones. Does this bother you?

BURGESS

Yes, I hate having two different versions of the same book. The U.S. edition has a chapter short, and hence the arithmological plan is messed up. Also, the implied view of juvenile violence as something to go through and then grow out of is missing in the American edition; and this reduces the book to a mere parable, whereas it was intended to be a novel.

INTERVIEWER

What happens in that twenty-first chapter?

BURGESS

In Chapter 21 Alex grows up and realizes that ultra-violence is a bit of a bore and it's time he had a wife and a malenky googoogooing malchickiwick to call him dadada. This was meant to be a mature conclusion but nobody in America has ever liked the idea.

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INTERVIEWER

Did Stanley Kubrick consider filming the Heinemann version?

BURGESS

Kubrick discovered the existence of this final chapter when he was halfway through the film, but it was too late to think of altering the concept. Anyway, he too, an American, thought it too milk-and-watery. I don't know what to think now. After all, it's twelve years since I wrote the thing.

INTERVIEWER

Did you attempt to get the complete novel published here?

BURGESS

Yes—well, I was very dubious about the book itself. When I wrote the book my agent was not willing to present it to a publisher, which is rather unusual; and the sort of publishers in England were very dubious about the book. So when the American publisher made this objection to the final chapter, I didn't feel myself to be in a very strong position. I was a little hesitant to judge the book; I was a little too close to it. I thought: "Well, they may be right." Because authors do tend to be (especially after the completion of a book) very uncertain about the value of the book; and perhaps I gave in a little too weakly, but my concern was partly a financial one. I wanted it to be published in America, and I wanted some money out of it. So I said, "Yes." Whether I'd say "Yes" now I don't know; but I've been persuaded by so many critics that the book is better in its American form that I say, "All right, they know best."

INTERVIEWER

Would it be possible for an American press to put out a limited, hard-bound edition which includes the excluded chapter as a sort of appendix?

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BURGESS

I think this should be possible. The best way of doing it is to bring out an annotated edition of the book with this final chapter—an idea which is being resisted by my publishers for some reason, I don't know why. I would be very interested in the comments of the average, say, American student on the differences between the two versions. Because I'm not able to judge myself very clearly now, as to whether I was right or wrong. What is *your* opinion, what do you feel about that?

INTERVIEWER

I find the last chapter problematical in that while it creates an entirely different context for the work, it seems anticlimactic after the neat resurrection of the old Alex, in the twentieth chapter.

BURGESS

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Still it should remain, because your meaning is altered by the cutting off of the context.

BURGESS

Well, the worst example I know of unjustified translation is to be found in Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End*, where in the British edition under the imprint of Bodley Head, Graham Greene has taken upon himself to present *Parade's End* as a trilogy, saying he doesn't think the final novel, *The Last Post*, works and he feels perhaps Ford would have agreed with him; and therefore he has taken the liberty of getting rid of the final book. I think Greene is wrong; I think that whatever Ford said, the work is a tetralogy, and the thing is severely maimed with the loss of his final book. An author is not to be trusted in his judgment of this sort of thing. Authors very frequently try to be indifferent to their books. Certainly they are so sick of their books that they don't want to make any serious judgment on them. The problem comes up, you

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see, when one reads Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust*, because this frightful ending (where Tony Last spends all his time reading Dickens to this half-breed in the jungle), appeared previously as a short story; and knowing the short story one has a strange attitude to the book. Which makes us feel that here is a deliberate pasting together, where this giant figure at the end that turns up does not spring automatically out of the book but is just taken arbitrarily from another work. Perhaps one shouldn't know too much about these things. Of course one can't avoid it. These two versions of Samuel Butler's *Way of All Flesh*—this raises the problem. Which version would we like better, which is the right version? It's better to know only one thing, to be fairly ignorant of what was going on. You know, behind the version we know.

INTERVIEWER

Isn't this an argument against publishing a complete *A Clockwork Orange*, since a twenty-chapter version is embedded in everyone's mind?

BURGESS

I don't know; they're both relevant. They seem to me to express in a sense the difference between the British approach to life and the American approach to life. There may be something very profound to say about this difference in these different presentations of the novel. I don't know; I'm not able to judge.

INTERVIEWER

In *A Clockwork Orange* and *Enderby* especially there's a persistent strain of mockery toward youth culture and its music. Is there anything good about them?

BURGESS

I despise whatever is obviously ephemeral and yet is shown as possessing some kind of ultimate value. The Beatles, for instance. Most youth culture, especially music, is based on so little knowledge of tradition, and it often elevates ignorance

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into a virtue. Think of the musically illiterate who set themselves up as "arrangers." And youth is so conformist, so little concerned with maverick values, so proud of being rather than making, so bloody sure that it and it alone *knows*.

INTERVIEWER

You used to play in a jazz band. Is there any hope that their interest in rock music may lead youth to jazz—or even to classical music?

BURGESS

I still play jazz, chiefly on a four-octave electric organ, and I prefer this to listening to it. I don't think jazz is for listening but for playing. I'd like to write a novel about a jazz pianist, or, better, about a pub pianist—which I once was, like my father before me. I don't think rock leads on to a liking for jazz. The kids are depressingly static in their tastes. They do so want *words*, and jazz gets along very nicely without words.

INTERVIEWER

In two of your novels the wordsmiths Shakespeare and Enderby are inspired by the Muse. But you've said as well that you like to regard your books as "works of craftsmanship for sale."

BURGESS

The Muse in *Nothing Like the Sun* was not a real muse—only syphilis. The girl in *Enderby* is really sex, which, like syphilis, has something to do with the creative process. I mean, you can't be a genius and sexually impotent. I still think that inspiration comes out of the act of making an artifact, a work of craft.

INTERVIEWER

Are works of art the products of strong libido?

BURGESS

Yes, I think art is sublimated libido. You can't be a eunuch priest and you can't be a eunuch artist. I became interested in

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syphilis when I worked for a time at a mental hospital full of GPI cases. I discovered there was a correlation between the spirochete and mad talent. The tubercle also produces a lyrical drive. Keats had both.

INTERVIEWER

Has your interest in Mann's *Doctor Faustus* influenced the use of syphilis and other diseases in your own work?

BURGESS

I've been much influenced by the thesis of Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, but I wouldn't want to have syphilis myself in order to be Wagner or Shakespeare or Henry VIII. Some prices are too high to pay. Oh, you'll want examples of these GPI talents. There was one man who'd turned himself into a kind of Scriabin, another who could give you the day of the week for any date in history, another who wrote poems like Christopher Smart. Many patients were orators or grandiose liars. It was like being imprisoned in a history of European art. Politics as well.

INTERVIEWER

Have you used in your novels any of the GPI cases that you encountered?

BURGESS

I did have the intention at one time of writing a long novel —a kind of *Magic Mountain*, I suppose—about life in a mental hospital; and perhaps I may yet get down to it. Of course, the trouble is it would take on a kind of political significance. People might think of works like *Cancer Ward*; it might be thought as presenting a clearly marked division between the patients and the hospital staff. One would be trading in a sort of political allegory; it's so easy to do that. Yet what interests me about a mental hospital that specializes in General Paralysis of the Insane is this relationship between disease and talent. Some of the tremendous skills that these patients show—these tremendous mad abilities—all stem out of the spirochete. I

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have pursued this in a couple of novels (or at least in one novel), but to do it on a larger scale would require a kind of rationale which I haven't yet worked out. I don't think it should be done purely as a documentary novel, as a naturalistic presentation of what life is like in such hospitals; but it does suggest to me that it's tied up with symbols of some kind—tied up with an interior, deeper meaning. Of course one never knows what this meaning will be, but *The Magic Mountain* has its deeper meanings beneath the naturalistic surface. I wouldn't want to imitate that. One has to wait, I'm afraid—a long time sometimes—for the experience one's had to present itself in workable form, as a form that can be shaped into something like a work of art.

INTERVIEWER

Do you see any contradiction in choosing a craftsman like Joyce as one of your literary models while classifying yourself as a "Grub Street writer" at the same time?

BURGESS

Why contradiction? But I've never really regarded Joyce as a literary model. Joyce can't be imitated and there's no imitation Joyce in my work. All you can learn from Joyce is the exact use of language. "Grub Street writer" means Dr. Johnson as well as our wretched columnists, and Johnson was an exact user of language.

INTERVIEWER

You've certainly studied Joyce very thoroughly. Does knowing what he has done open more doors than it closes?

BURGESS

Joyce opened doors only to his own narrow world; his experiments were for himself only. But all novels are experimental, and *Finnegans Wake* is no more spectacular an experiment than, say, *Prancing Nigger* or *His Monkey Wife*. It looks spectacular because of the language. *MF*, believe it or not, is a completely original experiment.

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INTERVIEWER

Isn't Joyce's attempt to devote virtually an entire novel to the Unconscious more than a purely linguistic experiment?

BURGESS

Yes, of course. The wakeworld is only narrow in that it's asleep, fixed on one set of impulses only, has too few characters.

INTERVIEWER

Can't contemporary writers use some of Joyce's techniques without being mere imitators?

BURGESS

You can't use Joyce's techniques without being Joyce. Technique and material are one. You can't write like Beethoven without writing Beethoven, unless you're Beethoven.

INTERVIEWER

Has Nabokov influenced your work at all? You've praised *Lolita* highly.

BURGESS

Reading *Lolita* meant that I enjoyed using lists of things in *The Right to an Answer*. I've not been much influenced by Nabokov, nor do I intend to be. I was writing the way I write before I knew he existed. But I've not been impressed so much by another writer in the last decade or so.

INTERVIEWER

Yet you've been called an "English Nabokov," probably because of the cosmopolitan strain and verbal ingenuity in your writing.

BURGESS

No influence. He's a Russian, I'm English. I meet him halfway in certain temperamental endowments. He's very artificial, though.

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INTERVIEWER

In what way?

BURGESS

Nabokov is a natural dandy on the grand international scale. I'm still a provincial boy scared of being too nattily dressed. All writing is artificial and Nabokov's artifacts are only contrived in the *récit* part. His dialogue is always natural and masterly (when he wants it to be). *Pale Fire* is only termed a novel because there's no other term for it. It's a masterly literary artifact which is poem, commentary, casebook, allegory, sheer structure. But I note that most people go back to reading the poem, not what surrounds the poem. It's a fine poem, of course. Where Nabokov goes wrong, I think, is in sometimes *sounding* old-fashioned—a matter of rhythm, as though Huysmans is to him a sound and modern writer whose tradition is worthy to be worked in. John Updike sounds old-fashioned sometimes in the same way—glorious vocabulary and imagery but a lack of muscle in the rhythm.

INTERVIEWER

Does Nabokov rank at the top with Joyce?

BURGESS

He won't go down in history as one of the greatest names. He's unworthy to unlatch Joyce's shoe.

INTERVIEWER

Have any new writers appeared of late that you think are destined for greatness?

BURGESS

I can't think of any in England. The trouble with American writers is that they die before becoming great—Nathanael West, Scott Fitzgerald, etc. Mailer will become a great autobiographer. Ellison will be great if only he'll write more. Too many *homines unius libri* like Heller.

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INTERVIEWER

American writers certainly tend to burn themselves out early, at least. Do you think it takes more than one book for a writer to earn the label "great"?

BURGESS

A man can write one book that can be great, but this doesn't make him a great writer—just the writer of a great book. Samuel Butler's *Way of All Flesh* is a great novel but nobody calls Butler a great novelist. I think a writer has to extend very widely, as well as plunge very deep, to be a great novelist.

INTERVIEWER

Did Fitzgerald write a great novel?

BURGESS

I don't think Fitzgerald's books great—style too derivatively romantic, far less of that curious freshness of vision than you find in Hemingway—Hemingway is a great novelist, I think, but he never wrote a great novel (a great novella, yes). I think America likes its artists to die young, in atonement for materialist America's sins. The English leave the dying young to Celts like Dylan Thomas and Behan. But I can't understand the American literary block—as in Ellison or Salinger—unless it means that the blocked man isn't forced economically to write (as the English writer, lacking campuses and grants, usually is) and hence can afford the luxury of fearing the critics' pounce on a new work not as good as the last (or the first). American writers drink a lot when they're "blocked" and drunkenness—being a kind of substitute for art—makes the block worse. I've found it best, especially since my first wife, who drank less than I, died of cirrhosis, to drink little. But I smoke much, and that's probably worse than five martinis a day.

INTERVIEWER

You've spoken highly of Defoe as a novelist and practical

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journalist, and you also admire Sterne as a writer. What special appeal do these 18th-century writers have for you?

BURGESS

I admire Defoe because he worked hard. I admire Sterne because he did everything the French are trying so unhandily to do now. Eighteenth-century prose has a tremendous vitality and scope. Not Fielding, though. Sentimental, too much given to contrivances. Sterne and Swift (who, Joyce said, should have exchanged names) are men one can learn technically from all the time.

INTERVIEWER

Speaking of the French—your playful novels of ideas tend to be more in the French literary tradition, perhaps, than any other. Has this kept them from becoming better known in England and America?

BURGESS

The novels I've written are really mediaeval Catholic in their thinking, and people don't want that today. God forbid they should be "French." If they're not read it's because the vocabulary is too big and people don't like using dictionaries when they're reading mere novels. I don't give a damn, anyway.

INTERVIEWER

This Catholic emphasis accounts in part for the frequent comparisons made between your novels and Evelyn Waugh's, and yet you've said you don't find Waugh's aristocratic idea of Catholicism attractive. What do you like about his work?

BURGESS

Waugh is funny, Waugh is elegant, Waugh is economical. His Catholicism, which I despise as all cradle Catholics despise converts, is the thing in him which means least to me. Indeed, it injures his *Sword of Honour*.

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INTERVIEWER

This charge has often been made—along with that of sentimentality—against *Brideshead Revisited*, but *Sword of Honour* is often called the best novel in English about World War II. How does Waugh's (or Guy Crouchback's) Catholicism weaken it?

BURGESS

Crouchback's Catholicism weakens *Sword of Honour* in the sense that it sectarianizes the book—I mean, we have Crouchback's moral view of the war and this is not enough: we need something that lies beneath religion. In our age it's a weakness to make Catholic theology the basis of a novel, since it means everything's cut and dried and the author doesn't have to re-think things out. The weakness of Greene's *Heart of the Matter* is derived from its author's fascination with theology: the sufferings of the hero are theological sufferings, invalid outside the narrow field of Catholicism. When I taught Waugh and Greene to Muslim students in Malaya they used to laugh. Why can't this man have two wives if he wants them, they would say. What's wrong with eating the bit of bread the priest gives you when you've been sleeping with a woman not your wife, and so on. They never laughed at the tragic heroes of the Greeks and Elizabethans.

INTERVIEWER

Does the difference between cradle and convert Catholicism influence an author's work in such an essential way that you tend to prefer a novelist like François Mauriac to Graham Greene?

BURGESS

English converts to Catholicism tend to be bemused by its glamour and even look for more glamour in it than is actually there—like Waugh, dreaming of an old English Catholic aristocracy, or Greene, fascinated by sin in a very cold-blooded way. I wished I liked Mauriac more as a writer. The fact is that I prefer the converted Catholics because they happen to

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be better novelists. I do try to forget that Greene is a Catholic when I read him. He too is now, I think, trying to forget. *The Comedians* was a kind of philosophical turning point. *Travels With My Aunt* is deliciously free of morality of any kind, except a very delightful kind of inverted morality.

INTERVIEWER

In an essay on Waugh you mentioned "the Puritan that lurks in every English Catholic." Do you see this residue of Puritanism lurking in your own writing at all?

BURGESS

Of course it's in me. We English take our Catholicism seriously, which the Italians and French don't, and that makes us earnest and obsessed about sin. We really absorbed hell—perhaps a very Nordic notion—and think about it when committing adultery. I'm so Puritanical that I can't describe a kiss without blushing.

INTERVIEWER

Are there any limits that you think an author should observe in the language he uses to present controversial subject matter?

BURGESS

My aversion to describing amorous details in my work is probably that I treasure physical love so highly I don't want to let strangers in on it. For, after all, when we describe copulation we're describing our own experiences. I like privacy. I think that other writers should do what they can do, and if they can spend—as one of my American girl students did—ten pages on the act of fellatio without embarrassing themselves, very good luck to them. But I think there's more artistic pleasure to be gained from the ingenious circumvention of a taboo than from what is called total permissiveness. When I wrote my first Enderby novel I had to make my hero say "For cough," since "Fuck off" was not then acceptable. With the second book the climate had changed and Enderby was

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at liberty to say "Fuck off." I wasn't happy. It was too easy. He still said "For cough" while others responded with "Fuck off." A compromise. Literature, however, thrives on taboos, just as all art thrives on technical difficulties.

INTERVIEWER

Several years ago you wrote, "I believe the wrong God is temporarily ruling the world and that the true God has gone under," and added that the novelist's vocation predisposes him to this Manichean view. Do you still believe this?

BURGESS

I still hold this belief.

INTERVIEWER

Why do you think that the novelist is predisposed to regard the world in terms of "essential opposition"? Unlike the Manicheans you seem to maintain a traditional Christian belief in original sin.

BURGESS

Novels are about conflicts. The novelist's world is one of essential oppositions of character, aspiration and so on. I'm only a Manichee in the widest sense of believing that duality is the ultimate reality; the original sin bit is not really a contradiction, though it does lead one on to depressingly French heresies, like Graham Greene's own Jansenism, as well as Albigensianism (Joan of Arc's religion), Catharism, and so on. I'm entitled to an eclectic theology as a novelist, if not as a human being.

INTERVIEWER

In planning your novels have you ever considered separating them, as Simenon does, into "commercial" and "uncommercial" works, or, like Greene, into "novels" and "entertainments"?

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BURGESS

All my novels belong to the one category—intended to be, as it were, serious entertainment, no moral aim, no solemnity. I want to please.

INTERVIEWER

Aren't you divorcing morality from aesthetics? This view is certainly consistent with your dismissal in *Shakespeare* of the Anglo-Saxon notion that a great artist must have a great moral sensibility.

BURGESS

I don't divorce morals and aesthetics. I merely believe that a man's literary greatness is no index of his personal ethics. I don't, true, think that the job of literature is to teach us how to behave, but I think it can make clearer the whole business of moral choice by showing what the nature of life's problems is. It's after truth, which is not goodness.

INTERVIEWER

You've said that the novel gets an implied set of values derived from religion but that other arts, such as music and architecture, are, unlike fiction, "neutral." Does this make them more or less attractive at this point?

BURGESS

I enjoy writing music precisely because one is divorced from "human" considerations like belief, conduct. Pure form, nothing more. But then I tend to despise music just because it is so *mindless*. I've been writing a string quartet based on a musical theme that Shakespeare throws at us, in sol-fa notation, in *Love's Labour's Lost* (the theme is CDGAEF), and it's been pure bliss. I've been thoroughly absorbed by it, on planes, in hotel bedrooms, anywhere where I had nothing else to do and there was no bloody musak playing. (Don't the musak purveyors ever think of the people who actually have to write music?) Now I'm a little ashamed that the music engages nothing but purely formal problems. So I os-

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cillate between a hankering after pure form and a realization that literature is probably valuable because it *says things*.

INTERVIEWER

How does political neutrality figure in all this? In your novels the neutrals, such as Mr. Theodorescu in *Tremor of Intent*, are usually villains.

BURGESS

If art should be neutral, if it can, life should be committed, if it can. There's no connection between political and religious neutrality and that blessed *achieved* neutrality of, say, music. Art is, so to speak, the church triumphant, but the rest of life is in the church militant. I believe that good and evil exist, though they have nothing to do with art, and that evil has to be resisted. There's no inconsistency in holding an aesthetic so different from such an ethic.

INTERVIEWER

Several of your recent novels have exotic foreign settings, even though you remarked a few years ago that the artist should exhaust the resources of the "here and now" as a true test of his art. Have you changed your mind?

BURGESS

Yes, I changed my mind. I'm limited by temperament, I now discover, to being moved or excited by any place in the world so long as it's not England. This means that all my settings must be "exotic."

INTERVIEWER

Why do you consider England so dull a subject?

BURGESS

Dull for me if not for others. I like societies where there's a dynamism of conflict. In other words, I think novels should be about the whole of a society—by implication if nothing else—and not just a little pocket inside. English fiction tends

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to be about these pockets—love affairs in Hampstead, Powell's bohemian aristocracy, Snow's men of power. Dickens gave you the lot, like Balzac. Much modern American fiction gives you the lot. You could reconstruct the whole of modern America from even a little mad fantasy like Phil Roth's *The Breast*. But I may have a personal thing about England—a sense of exclusion and so on. It may even be so simple a matter as liking extreme climates, fights in bars, exotic waterfronts, fish soup, a lot of garlic. I find it easier to imagine a surrealistic version of New Jersey than of old England, though I could see some American genius making a whole strange world of Mr. Heath's inheritance. Probably (as Thomas Pynchon never went to Valletta or Kafka to America) it's best to imagine your own foreign country. I wrote a very good account of Paris before I ever went there. Better than the real thing.

INTERVIEWER

Was this in *The Worm and the Ring*?

BURGESS

Yes. Paris was a town I always tried to avoid; but I've been more and more in it recently and find that the account of Paris I wrote (although it smells of maps and tourist guides) is not unlike the reality. This is true also with Joyce's Gibraltar, in *Ulysses*; one has no need to visit the country to write about the country.

INTERVIEWER

And yet you draw a good picture of Leningrad in *Honey for the Bears*.

BURGESS

Oh, I knew Leningrad. Yes, that's right. But not too well; for if one gets to know a town too well, then the sharpness of the impression is blunted and one is not interested in writing about it. Anyway, the interesting point is that one first meets a town through its smells; this is especially true in

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Europe. Leningrad has a peculiar smell of its own, and you become habituated to these smells in time and you forget what they are; and you're not able to approach it in those highly sensuous terms when writing about it if you know a place too well. If you're in a town for about a month somewhere, you can't retain a sensuous impression. As with Paris, you smell the Gauloise when you arrive; but you cease to smell the Gauloise in time. You get so used to it.

INTERVIEWER

You've said that Leningrad resembles Manchester. How are they alike?

BURGESS

I think it was just the sense of the architecture, the rather broken-down architecture of Leningrad, the sense of large numbers of the working class, rather shabbily dressed. And I suppose in some ways the *smell* of Manchester—I always associated Manchester with the smell of tanneries, very pungent smells, as you know. I got this same smell out of Leningrad. It's a small thing, but these small things have a curious habit of becoming important. You try to fix a place in your mind. I don't know what the smell of Milwaukee is, I don't think the American cities have any smell. That's probably why they are rather unmemorable. Smell is most elusive of the senses. To a novelist it is somehow the most important of the senses.

INTERVIEWER

You've also said that the serious novelist should be prepared to stay in one place and really get to know it. Do you hope to do this with Italy now?

BURGESS

Again, I seem to have changed my mind. I think I shall want to invent places more than merely reproduce them, and don't please put this down to the influence of *Ada*. The next four novels will be set, respectively, in mediaeval England,

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modern New Jersey, Italy in the last fifty years, Jane Austen's England.

INTERVIEWER

Have your travels given you a special sense of the variety of human types, such as Forster's Prof. Godbole?

BURGESS

Fundamentally people are all the same, and I've lived among enough different races long enough to be dogmatic about this. Godbole in *A Passage to India* is an eccentric mystic of the type that any culture can throw up.

INTERVIEWER

At this point do you regard yourself as an expatriate Englishman or as an exile?

BURGESS

A verbal quibble. I've voluntarily exiled myself, but not forever. Nevertheless, I can't think of any good reason for going back to England except on a holiday. But one is, as Simone Weil said, faithful to the cuisine one was brought up on, and that probably constitutes patriotism. I am sometimes mentally and physically ill for Lancashire food—hot pot, lobscowse and so on—and I have to have these things. I'm loyal to Lancashire, I suppose, but not strongly enough to wish to go back and live there.

INTERVIEWER

What are "hot pot" and "lobscowse"?

BURGESS

Hot pot, or Lancashire hot pot, is made in this way. An earthenware dish, a layer of trimmed lamb chops, a layer of sliced onions, a layer of sliced potatoes, then continue the layers till you reach the top. Add seasoned stock. On top put mushrooms or more potato slices to brown. Add oysters or kidneys as well if you wish. Bake in a moderate oven for a

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long time. Eat with pickled cabbage. Lobscowse is a sailor's dish from Liverpool (Liverpudlians are called "scousers" or "scowsers") and is very simple. Dice potatoes and onions and cook in a pan of seasoned water. When they're nearly done get rid of excess liquid and add a can or two of cubed (or diced) corned beef. Heat gently. Eat with mixed pickles. I love cooking these dishes and, once known, everybody loves them. They're honest and simple. Lancashire has a great cuisine, including a notable shop cuisine—meaning you can buy great delicacies in shops. Lancashire women traditionally work in the cotton mills and cook dinner only at weekends. Hence the things you can get in cooked food-shops—fish and chips, Bury puddings, Eccles cakes, tripe, cowheel, meat pies (hot, with gravy poured into a hole from a jug), and so on. Fish and chips is now, I think, internationally accepted. Meat and potato pie is perhaps the greatest of the Lancashire dishes —a "drier" hot pot with a fine flaky crust.

INTERVIEWER

I'm tempted to visit Manchester. Lawrence Durrell, another expatriate English writer, has said that since America and Russia are going to determine our future, one is obliged to stop traveling and start thinking when one is in either country. It's different, he says, from going to Italy—a pure pleasure. Do you agree?

BURGESS

Durrell has never yet said anything I could agree with. He reminds me of that TV show woman in America, Virginia Graham. I just don't know what the hell he can mean by that. In America and Russia I meet people, get drunk, eat, just as I do in Italy. I see no signs of purely metaphysical import. Those are left to governments, and governments are what I try to ignore. All governments are evil, including that of Italy.

INTERVIEWER

That sounds vaguely anarchic, or at least un-American. Did

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you have an undergraduate Marxist period, like Victor Crabbe in *The Long Day Wanes*?

BURGESS

I was never a Marxist, though I was always, even as an undergraduate, ready to play the Marxist game—analyzing Shakespeare in Marxist terms and so on. I always loved dialectical materialism. But it was a structuralist love from the start. To take socialism seriously, as opposed to minimal socialization (what America needs so desperately) is ridiculous.

INTERVIEWER

Doesn't "minimal socialization" require an increase in the size and power of central government? Only the American federal government can fund the equivalent of the English or Scandinavian health plans; the need for inexpensive medical treatment is acute here.

BURGESS

I loathe the State but concede that socialized medicine is a priority in any civilized country today. In England it saved me from bankruptcy during my wife's final illness (though perhaps a private insurance policy might have taken care of it. You can't opt out of the state scheme, however). Socialized medicine—which in England was a Liberal idea anyway—doesn't have to mean out and out socialism with everything nationalized. If America gets it, it will be only the doctors and dentists who will try not to make it work, but, as in England, there's no reason why a private practice shouldn't coexist with a national health one. You go to a dentist in England and he says "Private or National Health?" The difference in treatment is hardly noticeable, but the State materials (tooth-fillings, spectacles, and so on) are inferior to what you buy as a private patient.

INTERVIEWER

Do these views make you a political conservative, then? You've said you would reluctantly vote Conservative in England.

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BURGESS

I think I'm a Jacobite, meaning that I'm traditionally Catholic, support the Stuart monarchy and want to see it restored, and distrust imposed change even when it seems to be for the better. I honestly believe that America should become monarchist (preferably Stuart) because with a limited monarchy you have no president, and a president is one more corruptible element in government. I hate all republics. I suppose my conservatism, since the ideal of a Catholic Jacobite imperial monarch isn't practicable, is really a kind of anarchism.

INTERVIEWER

Many Americans believe their presidency has evolved into a form of monarchy, with unhappy results. Do you see anarchy as a viable political alternative?

BURGESS

The U.S. presidency is a Tudor monarchy plus telephones. Your alternative is either a return to the limited monarchy of the British Commonwealth—a constitutional monarch is at least out of politics and can't get dirty or corrupt—or devolution into unfederated states with a loose cooperative framework for large development schemes. Anarchy is a man's own thing, and I think it's too late in the day to think of it as a viable system or non-system in a country as large as America. It was all right for Blake or for Thoreau, both of whom I admire immensely, but we'll never get it so full-blooded again. All we can do is keep pricking our government all the time, disobeying all we dare (after all, we have livings to earn), asking why, maintaining a habit of distrust.

INTERVIEWER

You've urged fellow artists to seek depth by "digging for the mythical." Are you more interested in creating new myths or in re-examining old ones, as you did with the *Aeneid* in *A Vision of Battlements*?

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BURGESS

At present I'm interested in what structuralism can teach us about myth. I don't think I can invent my own myths, and I still think there's a great deal of fictional revivification possible with regard to such myths as the Jason/Golden Fleece one (on which I plan a novel, incidentally). Existing myths carry useful depth, a profundity of meaning which saves the novelist a lot of inventive trouble.

INTERVIEWER

How does Jason's pursuit of the Golden Fleece apply to our time?

BURGESS

My Jason novel, if I ever write it, will just use the Argonaut story as a framework for picaresque adventures. No deeper significance.

INTERVIEWER

Have you considered basing a novel on myths associated with Oriental religions, as Mann did in *The Transposed Heads*?

BURGESS

Strangely, I've been contemplating making a musical play out of Mann's *The Transposed Heads*—very charming, but only a game despite the claims of psychological profundity sometimes made for it. I've six years in the East but am not greatly drawn to Eastern myths, except that of the endless Javanese shadow-play, which is like *Finnegans Wake* anyway. But I've thought of a novel based on Munshi Abdullah's *Hikayat*. That German hunger for the East—Hesse as well as Mann—is very curious. They might not have seen it as so romantic if they'd been colonial officers. Perhaps that's what they really wanted to be.

INTERVIEWER

Structuralism plays a big part in *MF*. How important is it to you as a novelist of ideas?

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BURGESS

Structuralism is the scientific confirmation of a certain theological conviction—that life is binary, that this is a duoverse and so on. What I mean is that the notion of essential opposition—not God/Devil but just x/y—is the fundamental one, and this is a kind of purely structuralist view. We end up with form as more important than content, with speech and art as phatic processes, with the big moral imponderables as mere hot air. Marshall McLuhan has been limping along this track independently of Lévi-Strauss. How marvelous that the essential bifurcation which is man is expressed in trousers that carry Lévi-Strauss' name.

INTERVIEWER

Along with establishing a firm connection between language and myth, you've also indicated about the future of the novel that "only through the exploration of language can the personality be coaxed into yielding a few more of its secrets." Would you expand on that?

BURGESS

By extension of vocabulary, by careful distortion of syntax, by exploitation of various prosodic devices traditionally monopolised by poetry, surely certain indefinite or complex areas of the mind can more competently be rendered than in the style of, say, Irving Stone or Wallace.

INTERVIEWER

Are you ever tempted to lavish complex prose on a simple protagonist, as Flaubert did in *A Simple Heart*?

BURGESS

Try and make your language fit your concept of the subject more than the subject itself. "Here's this stupid man who's written a most highly wrought work about a housemaid called Félicité." But Flaubert was concerned, surely, with the nobility of that heart and lavished his prose riches upon it. Style is less a preoccupation than a perennial problem. Find-

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ing the right style for the subject, I mean. This must mean that the subject comes first and the style after.

INTERVIEWER

You've referred to yourself as a "serious novelist who is attempting to extend the range of subject-matter available to fiction." How have you tried to do this?

BURGESS

I've written about the dying British empire, lavatories, structuralism and so on, but I don't really think that that kind of subject matter is what I had in mind when I made that statement. I meant the modification of the sensibility of the British novel, which I may have achieved a little, a very little. The new areas are more technical than thematic.

INTERVIEWER

In *The Novel Now* you said that the novel is the only important literary form we have left. Why do you think this is true?

BURGESS

Yes, the novel is the only *big* literary form we have left. It is capable of enclosing the other, lesser, literary forms, from the play to the lyric poem. Poets are doing well enough, especially in America, but they can't achieve the architectonic skill which once lay behind the epic (for which the novel is now a substitute). The short sharp burst—in music as well as poetry—is not enough. The novel has the monopoly of *form* today.

INTERVIEWER

Granted this limited primacy of the novel, it's disturbing that novel sales in general are declining and that public attention is focused more on non-fiction. Are you tempted to turn more to biography, for example, in the future?

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BURGESS

I shall carry on with novelizing and hope for some little reward on the side. Biography is very hard work, no room for invention. But if I were a young man now I wouldn't dream of trying to become a professional novelist. But some day, perhaps soon, the old realization will come back—that reading about imaginary characters and their adventures is the greatest pleasure in the world. Or the second greatest.

INTERVIEWER

What is the first?

BURGESS

That depends upon your own tastes.

INTERVIEWER

Why do you regret becoming a professional novelist?

BURGESS

I think that the mental strain, the worry, you know, the self-doubt, are hardly worth the candle; the agonies of creation and the sense of responsibility to one's muse—all these various things become more than one can live with.

INTERVIEWER

Are the odds much longer today against anyone's sustaining himself by quality fiction writing?

BURGESS

I don't know. I know that the older I get the more I want to live and the less opportunity I have. I don't think I wanted to become chained to an art form, establishing one's identity through an art form; one is a kind of Frankenstein creating a monster, so to speak. I wish I could live easier; I wish I didn't have the sense of responsibility to the arts. More than anything I wish I didn't have the prospect of having to write certain novels, which must be written because nobody else will write them. I wish I were freer, I like freedom; and I

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think I would have been much happier living as a colonial officer writing the odd novel in my spare time. Then I would have been happier than as a sort of professional man of letters, making a living out of words.

INTERVIEWER

Do film versions help or hinder novels?

BURGESS

Films help the novels they're based on, which I both resent and am grateful for. My *Clockwork Orange* paperback has sold over a million in America, thanks to dear Stanley. But I don't like being beholden to a mere film maker. I want to prevail through pure literature. Impossible, of course.

INTERVIEWER

You've referred to *A Vision of Battlements*, your first novel, "like all my stories since, as a slow and cruel stripping-off of illusion," yet you are often called a comic writer. Is comedy by nature so cruel, or do you consider yourself more as a satirist?

BURGESS

Comedy is concerned with truth quite as much as tragedy; and the two, as Plato recognized, have something fundamental in common. They're both stripping processes; they both tear off externals and show man as a poor forked animal. Satire is a *particular* kind of comedy, limiting itself to particular areas of behavior, not to the general human condition. I don't think I'm a satirist.

INTERVIEWER

Are you a black humorist as well—or are all these categories too confining?

BURGESS

I think I'm a comic writer, *malgré moi*. My Napoleon is turning out comic, and I certainly didn't intend that. I don't

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think I know what black humor is. Satirist? Satire is a difficult medium, ephemeral unless there's tremendous vitality in the form itself—like *Absalom and Achitophel*, *Tale of a Tub*, *Animal Farm*: I mean, the work has to subsist as story or poetry even when the objects of the satire are forgotten. Satire is now an element in some other form, not a form in itself. I like to be called just a novelist.

INTERVIEWER

About ten years ago you wrote that you considered yourself a pessimist but believed that "the world has much solace to offer—love, food, music, the immense variety of race and language, literature, the pleasure of artistic creation." Would you make up the same list of saving graces today?

BURGESS

Yes, no change.

INTERVIEWER

Georges Simenon, another professional, has said that "writing is not a profession but a vocation of unhappiness. I don't think an artist can ever be happy." Do you think this is true?

BURGESS

Yes, Simenon's right. My eight-year-old son said the other day: "Dad, why don't you write for *fun*?" Even he divined that the process as I practice it is prone to irritability and despair. I suppose, apart from my marriage, I was happiest when I was doing a teaching job and had nothing much to think about in the vacations. The anxiety involved is intolerable. And—I differ here from Simenon—the financial rewards just don't make up for the expenditure of energy, the damage to health caused by stimulants and narcotics, the fear that one's work isn't good enough. I think, if I had enough money, I'd give up writing tomorrow.

—JOHN CULLINAN

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Mel Bochner lives in New York City.

Jane Bowles' play, *In the Summer House*, was first produced in New York in 1953; a novel, *Two Serious Ladies*, was published in 1943. Jane Bowles died this spring at the age of fifty-six.

Edwin Brock was introduced to modern poetry in the Royal Navy in the forties, and began publishing shortly afterwards in the poetry magazines of the time. His most recent volume of poetry, *Portraits and Poses*, will be published in New York by New Directions and in London by Secker & Warburg.

Tom Clark's latest books are *Smack* (Black Sparrow Press) and *All Stars*, an anthology (Goliard/Grossman).

Keith Cohen teaches at the Université de Paris VIII (Vincennes), and is currently completing his Ph.D thesis in comparative literature at Princeton University. "Natural Settings" is an excerpt from a work in progress.

Jack Collom lives in Boulder, Colorado, where he edits *the.*

Robert Creeley's *Day Book* was recently published by Scribners. He taught at the University of New York (Buffalo) during the past semester.

John Cullinan teaches at the University of California at Riverside. He is writing a book about Anthony Burgess' novels.

Curtis Faville's work has appeared in the *Chicago Review*, *Gum*, *L.*, and *Candy*.

Erica Jong's two collections of poetry are *Fruits and Vegetables* (Holt, 1971) and Half-Lives (Holt, 1973). She has recently completed a novel called *Fear of Flying* which will be published this fall. She lives in New York City where she teaches a poetry workshop at the 92nd Street Y.

Joanne Kyger is a survivor of the North Beach poets of the Beat era. *The Desecheo Notebook* was recently published by Arif Press in Berkeley.

Phillip Lopate has been active in the Teachers and Writers Collaborative in New York City, and is a member of the Good Company Modern Dance Troupe. He is the author of a collection of poems, *The Eyes Don't Always Want To Stay Open* (Sun Press), and a novella, *In Coyoacan* (Swollen Magpie Press).

Lewis MacAdams taught poetry to high school students in West Virginia last spring. He is the author of *The Poetry Room* (Harper & Row).

Harry Mathews' translations from contemporary French authors have appeared in issues 42 and 44 of *The Paris Review*.

David Mokshi has translated Arabic and Polynesian poetry.

Alice Notley's work is featured in the Goliard/Grossman anthology, *All Stars*.

Georges Perec won the Prix Renaudot with his first novel, *Les choses*, in 1965; it was published in New York by Grove Press. Subsequent works include the novels *Quel petit velo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?*, *Un homme qui dort* (from which the passages appearing in this issue are taken), and *La disparition*, a novel composed entirely without the letter e. A film version of *Un homme qui dort* is now in production. *Un homme qui dort* was published in the *Collection Les Lettres Nouvelles* at Editions Denoël, © 1967 Editions Denoël.

Maurice Roche is the author of a trilogy of novels—*Compact* (1966), *Circus* (1972), and *Codex* (forthcoming), all published in the *Collection Tel Quel* at Editions du Seuil. An extract from *Compact* appeared in *The Paris Review 44*. He has also published a book-length essay on Monteverdi in 1960. "Skol Nidre" is an excerpt from *Circus*, © 1972 Editions du Seuil.

George Schneeman's most recent expositions were at 98 Greene St. and the Fischbach Gallery in New York City.

Anne Waldman's new book, *Life Notes*, was published by Bobbs-Merrill.

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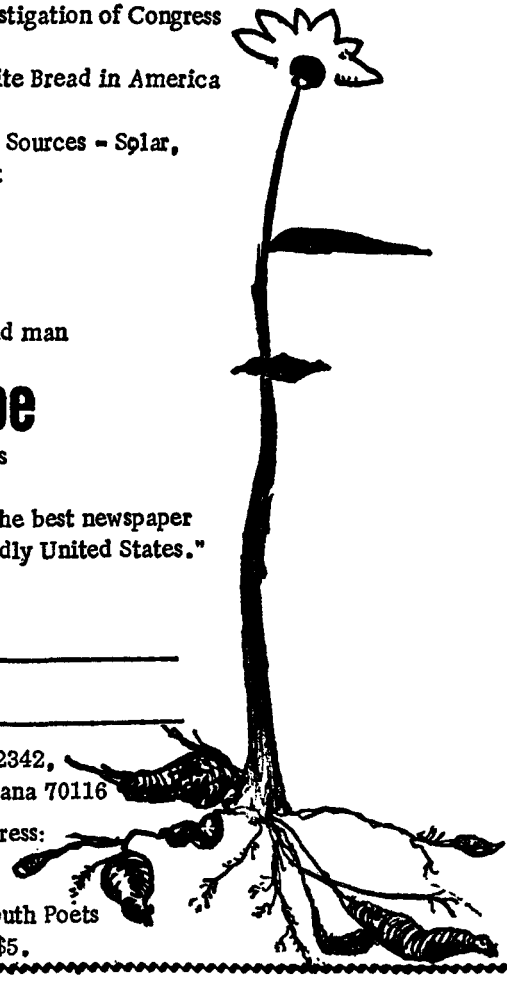

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